

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

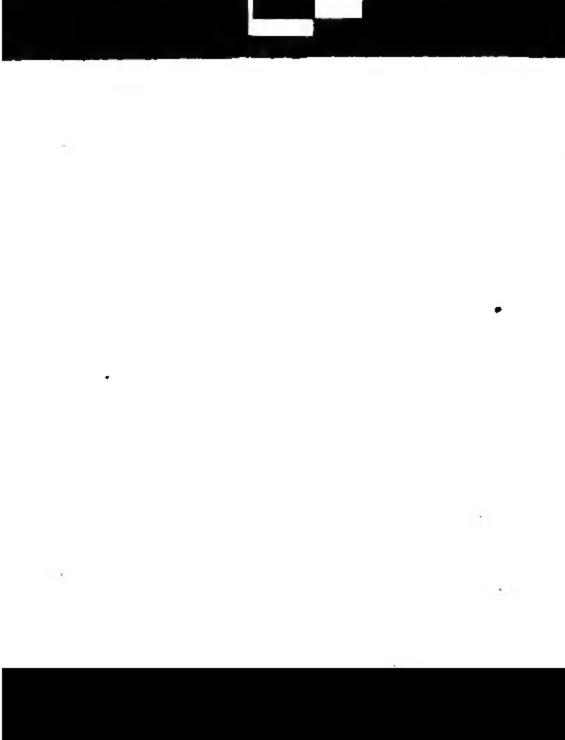
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

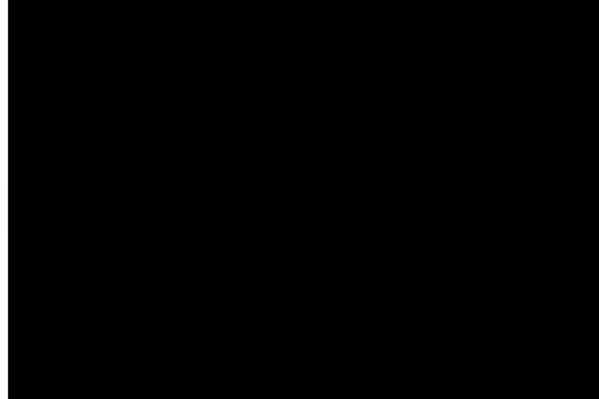
We also ask that you:

- + Make non-commercial use of the files We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + Refrain from automated querying Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + Maintain attribution The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + Keep it legal Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at http://books.google.com/









•

.

•

]

.

•

•

1

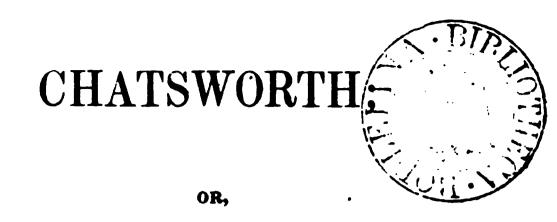
CHATSWORTH;

OR,

THE ROMANCE OF A WEEK.

VOLUME THE FIRST.





THE ROMANCE OF A WEEK.

By Peter George Patmore.

EDITED BY THE

AUTHOR OF "TREMAINE," "DE VERE," &c.

in three volumes.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1844.

LONDON:
HARRISON AND Co., PRINTERS,
St. MARTIN'S LANE.

CHATSWORTH.

I.

CLOSE OF THE LONDON SEASON.

The London season of 18— was scarcely over, though the wintry summer had worn itself painfully away into mid-autumn. A few more coming parties, casting their dull shadows before, still furnished excuses for those to bestow their inanity a little longer upon the town, who would otherwise have hastened to bestow it elsewhere; a few more budding flirtations were still to be mutually flattered into a fitting growth for the heated and perfumed atmosphere of a country conservatory to "force" them at once into the "bright consummate flower" of a declaration, or the bitter dead-sea fruit of a

B

divorce; a few more conspiracies were yet to be completed, in vice of which a winter in Paris was to be "made glorious summer," by the entanglement of some booby heir in the double meshes of a manœuvring mother and a heartless beauty; a few more pigeons were to be plucked at Crocky's, to feather the travelling nests of the periodical migrators to the pastoral hells of the Rheingau; -and, running their sweet course purely and brightly through all these—like a bright and pure stream through the foul streets of some pestilent city—a few more of those innocent and happy passions were to be warmed to that mutual interfusing of two young and pure hearts into one, which, even in the Great World that we are glancing at—nay,—which there more than anywhere else-forms the only perfect and enduring bliss of which the life of that World is capable.

The matter-of-fact reader will be good enough to comprehend, from the foregoing,

that the period at which our Chatsworth records open was about the third week in August,—just as the princely hospitalities of that noble demesne, having commenced earlier than usual, (with a view to a subsequent sojourn beneath Italian skies,) had collected within its classic walls, one of the most charmingly assorted companies, that even the fine intellectual taste and consummate social tact of the noble host himself had ever before made acceptable to each other.

It consisted—

But stay,—as we desire that the chief stars in our constellation of illuminatis should obtain for themselves in the reader's imagination that "local habitation" in the absence of which they would presently pass into empty abstractions—would not merely "come like shadows," (which is what we desire),—but would inevitably "so depart,"— (which is what we deprecate),—the patience of the better-instructed among those readers

In virtue, then, of that unlimited power which we "slaves of the lamp" possess for the nonce over all those who voluntarily place themselves within the scope of our spell, we take the liberty of casting that spell over our readers, wheresoever they may be—of lifting them, one and all, "above this visible diurnal sphere"—wafting them for a moment, by a fiat of our sovereign will, through the pleasant empyrean—and then gently depositing them on the bosom of their mother earth, at that particular spot where it is our pleasure that they should commence their local associations

"with us and with our comedy;" the spot which we choose to consider as the threshold of the demesne of Chatsworth Palace.

II.

AN ENGLISH SPA.

On opening their eyes, shaking their ears, and looking immediately around them, our aërial travellers will find themselves on a little patch of smooth-shaven turf, inclosed by a low, light, iron railing; dotted with diminutive flower beds, that look as if they had been cut out by a pastrycook's pie-mould; furnished here and there with green gardenchairs; and finished in the centre by a baby fountain, falling into what may be mistaken for a moderate-sized punch-bowl,—its edges glittering with moss-grown spar, its surface floating a single water-lily, and its shallows gay with gold and silver fish.

Doubtless the reader at first imagines that

we have, by way of being facetious, conveyed him to the "lawn" of some London cit's "cottage of gentility," on Clapham Common or Brixton Hill. Yet the great lumbering white-washed building that bounds his view close at hand,—with its gaping doors, staring windows, and straggling walls,—looking like something between a barrack and a cotton mill, only uglier than either,—forbids this conclusion.

A glance upward discloses the truth: we are standing on the "terrace" in front of "The Old Bath Hotel," at Matlock Bath.

It may please us, presently, to enter for a moment the obsolete halls of Dame Cumming; for they are classical ground: but metal more attractive than all the classics in anti-Christendom awaits us where we stand. Turn your back then, reader, on yonder old-fashioned boarding-house, which the Wizard of the North has preserved from demolition

by writing his magic name on one of its window panes, and where the beautiful Lady of Annesley made herself and her lover immortal by writing her's on the heart of the boy Byron—step a little to the left of the spot where we first took the liberty of depositing you—and look before, above, and on either side of you.

Of course, if a male, you belong to "The Travellers," or are qualified for it; and if a female, you are as familiar with the hills and plains, the groves and glades, which form the picturesque "lions" of Italy and Greece, as your kitchen-maid is with those of Green-wich, or your couturière with those of the Rhine. Yet, if you ever before looked upon a scene which, space for space, equalled in the three great components of scenic effect,—grandeur, beauty, and singularity,—the one that now lies within your ken,—be pleased to point it out, that we may proceed to do over again our travels in search of the picturesque.

Before you decide, however, examine the scene in detail. Right before you—close under your feet, as it were—rise what are evidently the extreme tops of lofty forest trees,—out of which (for the ear as well as the eye is enlisted in the office of admiration,) issues a gurgling, prattling sound, telling of a bright river, that for ever runs its sunless course, a hundred feet below.

Beyond the moveless tops of those trees,—
not more than double the distance just named,
—rises perpendicularly, several hundred feet,
what would seem to be a solid barren cliff,
but that Nature, a tirewoman whose taste and
skill would put to shame those of Maradan
herself, has clothed it, from head to foot, with
a robe of such infinite richness and variety of
material, such exquisite fashion, such felicitous adaptation to the forms on which it rests,
and in such artistical harmony with the hues
and colours distributed over it, that it looks a
thing of living and breathing beauty, rather

Observe too that, here and there, small patches of the lichened rock peep out from amidst the clinging or clasping foliage, as if on purpose to heighten by contrast the beauty of the general effect, and at the same time to prevent the imagination from forgetting what lies beyond. Indeed in the absence of this pretty expedient of Nature to keep in mind her "so potent art," of clothing all things in beauty when it so pleases her, one might fancy the whole to be some supernatural wall of forest, piled perpendicularly, tier above tier, to the clouds.

Turn we now to the right, and the eye pursues the same vast wall of forest, as it recedes windingly for a brief distance, and then, turning a huge elbow to the left, is backed entirely by the grey sky. Midway, however, from the latter point, and (apparently) at the extremity of the lofty terrace on which we are standing, rises, from the side

of a declivity out of sight, the white crenated spire of a lovely little church, seeming to spring out of the green turf, like the fairy spirit of the place, come thither to watch over its still beauty, (so Fancy prompts, and those who are too wise to listen to her had better leave us and our "gentle" readers to ourselves, and attend to good Mrs. Cumming's dinnerbell,) and protect it from the great Titanic monster that towers up above the ravine in an opposite direction, and seems (as we shall presently see) to be perpetually threatening it with a stony destruction.

Turning now in the direction just indicated —namely, to our full left as we stand on the turfed terrace of the Old Bath Hotel—we observe, in continuation, as it were, of the terrace, a broad rising pathway, which, as it mounts recedingly, pierces presently into a dense wood, where it is lost; but the eye, following its lead, continues to mount till it reaches the summit of an immense range of forest-clad

mountain, which shuts in all this side of the view. The wood on this portion of the scene being entirely of fir,—chiefly larch, its sharp cones, seen against the blue sky, give to the mountain the air of a crowned monarch.

This magnificent object is met, about a quarter of a mile from where we stand, by one still more remarkable, consisting of the continuation of that gorgeous screen of forestclothed cliffs which faces the spot whence we are taking our survey. But the nature of the wood and vegetation which clothe these cliffs is so entirely different from that of the opposite side of the ravine,—being composed of every variety of our own indigenous forest-trees and shrubs, unmixed with any of the formal fir and larch which exclusively cover the hills just described,—that the contrast is as striking as it is beautiful, the bleak and foreign-looking aspect of the one, setting off like a foil the rich, stately, and umbrageous masses, the festooned elegance, and occasional feathery lightness and ornamented grace, of the other.

These two opposite heights close in the view on the left, about a quarter of a mile from where we stand; but between them, a little nearer to us, though not appearing to be disjoined, but only to tower above them both, and frown down upon them like a great grey mass of moveless clouds, stands, or rather hangs in the burthened air, the enormous Titanic form that our fancy has assimilated to the demon of the spot, rebuked and kept in awe by the beautiful protecting spirit of it, which rises, in the form of a Christian temple, at the opposite extremity of the view.

We have hitherto been concerning ourselves only with the upper, the lower, and the more distant departments of the remarkable view before and about us. Look we now to those which form the central portion, nearer at

hand. On the right of the particular spot where we now stand, (namely, somewhat to the left, or north, of the little fountain in the centre of the terrace in front of the Old Bath Hotel,) no middle distance is visible; the view being closed upon us abruptly, by the rounding in and joining of the two sides of the ravine, just beyond the church spire that rises at the extremity of the terrace on which we stand: all the lower part of the scene, including one-half of the village, being hidden by the abrupt ascent of the rising ground which forms the terrace. But to the left,—where the receding fir-clad mountain on the one hand, the richly wooded perpendicular cliffs on the other, and the bare overtowering crag in the centre, seem to meet, and close up all egress from the ravine,—a middle distance presents itself, which forms the chief charm -the magic cestus-of the whole unrivalled scene.

Imagine, reader, midway between the spot

on which we stand, and the scene of mingled grandeur and beauty which has fixed us there as by a spell—imagine a light blue mist, ever rising as if from the level on which we stand, but in reality steaming up from the invisible vale below, expanding and rarefying as it rises, till, about halfway up the heights beyond, it melts into the invisible atmosphere. What can this be, but an incense-offering from man to the presiding Deity of the spot, the *genius loci*, who spreads out for his delectation all the grandeur and beauty on which we look?

And so in truth it is, although in vulgar parlance it be but the seacoal smoke from the dwellings which form the unseen hamlet below! for what else but a religious love for nature and her works, could have planted a nest of human dwellings in a spot where, a score or two of years ago, nothing existed but a wild and inaccessible ravine, formed out of the broken faces of a rifted rock, and no foot

of whose paths and road-ways, no fragment of whose dwellings, consists to this day of anything but the debris of that rock?

There is not in all Matlock Bath half a dozen square yards of natural level: the road that traverses the hamlet is cut out of the solid rock, on the left or west bank of the stream (the Derwent) that runs at the bottom of the ravine; the buildings are as it were cemented into the receding face of the rock, on the same side of the river, and rise behind and above each other, tier above tier; the approach to every one of them is by a steep artificial terrace, that terminates when the dwelling is reached; and you have only to suppose the case of some giant hand agitating for a moment the green mountain side, and all the dwellings that cling to it would drop off into the water-course below, like insects from a shaken leaf!

To return from this digression—the effect of the blue mist-like wreaths of smoke that ever rise from the lower parts of the hamlet, on the dwellings that cling, one by one, against the lofty hill-side, each half hidden in its over-hanging fir-grove, is exceedingly beautiful, as seen from our present point of view: it casts a floating veil over them, that, as it thickens from below, or is partially dispersed by the breeze as it rises, reminds one of that pretty optical illusion, the "Dissolving views."

III.

BUBBLES.

Such then is the scene that presents itself from one of the points of view (and there are twenty such, all different, yet all equally remarkable) at the little hamlet, a quarter of a mile long, and fifty yards wide, unknown to the English traveller by the name of "Matlock Bath,"—our first step over the threshold of

that district of the Peak over which Chatsworth reigns supreme.

Considering that, since the marvellous "bubble" discoveries of the "old man," and all the other old women, of the German spas, Matlock has grown obsolete,—especially now it has become accessible at the cost of a few hours' time, and a few shillings' money, -we are much too reasonable to ask people to be pleased with it: it is out of fashion, and there is no more to be said. But when English spa-goers have expended all their spare admiration on the aristocratic "finery" of Toeplitz and Carlsbad—(whose very innkeepers write themselves Countesses); on the Greenwich fair gaiety, gambling, and gormandising of Baden-Baden; on the cockney pastoralities of Wiesbaden; the sullen, snake-haunted seclusion of Schlangenbad; the leaden solitude (schwein excepted,) of Langen Schwalbach; the Regent's park ruralities of Marienbad; the Primrose-hill

all the other spas that it is their propleasure to patronise;—when, we say, I lish spa-hunters have exhausted and gratired of all these, they may perchance this worth while to bestow a passing glance (me out of curiosity) at a spot which as much passes them all in picturesque beauty, scenic grandeur and sublimity, as its I limpid, life-giving springs surpass in salu the dirty ditch-water, and the "inconverdistance," to which the places we have not owe their celebrity.

In the mean-time, proceed we in our contowards the more immediate scenes of search;—not, however, without halting brief space, and baiting our pen-winged however.

bled" and be-Granvilled world behind us, and forgetting for the moment that there is anything else on this breathing earth, but the lapsing stream, the laughing pastures, the lowing cattle, and the piping wood-birds, that surround us this divine evening, and the profound stillness of those lovely shades where we may lie and listen, as in a dream of Arcadia, to the unpronounced words,—" far above singing,"—of those imaginary lovers with whom these walks are peopled.

IV.

THE RAVINE.

Descending from our little artificial elevation on the Terrace of the Old Bath, we are presently buried, as it were, in the stony jaws of the ravine, and cannot see fifty yards before us in any direction, except upward, where the wooded heights of the receding hills on the left, and the precipitous cliffs on the right, rise (often) above the clouds.

But, buried as we are in this marble mausoleum of the living, (for every building about us is formed of the rude marble which constitutes the entire district,) the impressions which come to us from without, are touched and coloured by anything but funereal associations. The smiling pastures, and the sparkling river that hurries or lapses through them, glance and peep at us through the trees at every step, telling tales of pastoral peace, that nothing around threatens to mar; and the towering heights above, on either hand, and in front, are clothed and crowned with that luxuriant "pomp of groves," and that lovely garniture of clustering shrubs and clasping parasites, which, from the multitudinous Life that lurks or sports within and among them, cannot be contemplated, even from the confines of the grave itself, without a feeling that DEATH is but a baseless abstraction of the human mind, and that Nature knows it not.

A few score yards northward, still on the river's margin, brings us to that end of the hamlet; but the ravine winds on for half a mile further, bounded now only by its own stately confines on either side, and overlooked almost over-shadowed-by one bare and apparently blasted shoulder of rock, which towers threateningly above the two masses of umbrage that would otherwise seem to meet in each other's arms,—looking as if it stood there for ever, to forbid the banns between the feminine grace and beauty of the fir-clothed and gently receding Masson, on the one hand, and the masculine grandeur and Titanic dignity of the erect and commanding Tor, on the other.

As we proceed, the gorge shuts more closely in on the left, but opens a little on the right, and gives to the eye long lines of the Derwent, loitering leisurely through its banks of emerald turf, on which kine are feeding; while here and there, on the left, a little cottage ornée peers from out the wood-clothed face of the rock above our head, looking like "a weed which has no business there," and whispering us that its perplexed inhabitants, troubled between the opposite claims of society and of solitude, have fallen into the foolish blunder of missing the merits and compassing the discomforts of each.

Still keeping the winding road at the deep bottom of the ravine, close to the river's brink, we presently reach the northern extremity of the gorge; when the scene suddenly opens out, right and left, into a spacious pastoral valley, bounded on either hand by receding hills, richly wooded, and studded here and there, for the first mile or so from the singular spot we have just left, with single dwellings, of that peculiar description, between the cottage and the chateau, which are to be found nowhere else but in England, and nowhere

English a character as here;—as far removed from the ornate elegance and elaborate grace of the Italian Villa, as from the stiff and staring plainness of the French campagne. So sweetly do these dwellings harmonize, both in the style of their architecture, and the tone and colour of their material, (the warm, grey stone of the district,) with the scenery in which they stand, that they seem as it were to have grown there,—their warm, lichen-tinted faces blending with the soft green of the pleasant uplands out of which they rise, and with the shadowy umbrage in which they are half embowered.

In other respects there is nothing remark, able in the country on which we now emerge except the lofty isolated hills that rise here and there in the receding distances on either hand and in front, clothed from foot to summit with smooth turf, each coroneted by a little company of lofty trees, that, seen

feathering against the grey sky, look like the fantastic head-gear of some wild Indian beauty.

Another charm of the landscape we have now before us is, the delightful contrast offered by its expansive breadth, and its soft and smiling uniformity of tone, to the deep and frowning shadows, the abrupt broken surfaces, and the "dim religious lights," which marked the scene we have just left. It is like emerging from the pillared aisles and stately portals of some vast ruined cathedral, on to the green and smiling solitudes to which the chances and changes of "time and the hour" may have left it.

V.

LIKE BEGETS LIKE.

Every step we advance up the valley of the Derwent, grows more and more redolent of the

near at hand. Like the fabled tree within a certain distance of whose shadow no unclean thing would harbour, Chatsworth spreads its beautifying influence on all things within that circle at the extremity of one of whose radii our approach to it commenced.

On the southern side of Matlock Bath, the scenery, with infinite natural loveliness, is deformed, every here and there, by one of those enormities with which the pestilent Demon of commerce has desecrated a land that had otherwise rivalled in beauty the most beautiful of those in fable. Here stands, midway up the side of some fair, forest-clothed hill, everlastingly overlooking the vale, for miles around, with its innumerable eyes,—a vast Cotton Mill. There, down by the soft, sweet margin of the river, just where a gentle declivity in its course has broken its serene face into sparkling dimples—lo! a neverceasing noise of innumerable hammers issues

from low blackened walls, that, day and night, in sunshine and in moonlight, vomit forth vollies of poisonous smoke, that blast the trees all round, till no bird will sing in them.

Not much less offensive to the eye of taste—see! the be-pillared and pedimented mansion, or the be-battlemented Castle, of some Cotton—Lord or Iron-Master, hanging heavily against the brow of yonder green upland, like a loath—some goitre on the neck of some mountain maiden, that were else fair as her own hills.

Once passed the threshold of that circle of which Chatsworth is the centre, we have not only no more of these painful and offensive anomalies, but everything seems to take a tone and colour from those of the presiding divinity of the district. From the feudal dignity of Haddon, in its venerable decay, and the princely splendour of Alton Towers in its modern magnificence, down to the way-side hovel of the poorest peasant, all is in keeping

with itself, with its purposes, and with the objects which surround it. Every dwelling speaks the precise station of its owner, and that he is content with that station; neither shrinking painfully from the one below him, nor straining awkwardly towards that which is above him. The pleasant homestead of the substantial yeoman stands soberly in the midst of its subject fields, aiming at nothing higher than to mark the dwelling-place of their simple-minded owner. The modest domicile of the village pastor looks blandly from out its sheltering trees,—the emblem of that holy and happy calm, which it is the blessed office of its inmate to spread around him, but which never yet emanated from the paltry prettiness of a dandy parsonage. Even within the elegant retirement of the world-wearied recluse, or the philosophic seclusion of the lettered student, who are content to view mankind from the loop-holes of retreat,"

No demon whispers—Visto have a taste!

no vulgar classicalities shock the scholar's eye, by courting it in the midst of scenes where they have no business—no wealthy fool's "Folly" dares to face and affront the simplicities that would laugh it to scorn.

Such is the reflected influence of a spot like Chatsworth, in the individual instances which occur within its circle. In the collective ones which have grown up around it, that influence is no less remarkable and salutary: witness the charming little village of Rowsley, in view of which we now arrive, just before turning off on the right, to ascend you gentle rise, that screens Chatsworth itself from our view.

Rowsley is no pattern hamlet—no

Auburn, loveliest village of the plain;

still less is it an Edensor—the "Folly" (the only one he has ever indulged in,) of the noble owner of Chatsworth—a toy village, embroidered into one corner of the northern skirts of the park, to which we shall in-

troduce the reader by and by. Rowsley is the very ideal of a country village, without a single touch of the beau ideal about It is perfect in its pastoral and picturesque beauty, rather by reason of the utter absence of anything to offend the eye or shock the taste, than from the presence of anything to call forth remark or admira-It is not a meeting of many things, on account of their more or less conformity one with another; but a growing of many out of one, by a natural sequence of natural circumstances, connected with the locality, and its relation to the neighbourhing domain. The passage of the stream (the Derwent) across the public road at this point, early marked the spot for a simple bridge; and the junction of this line of way with that leading to Chatsworth, naturally indicated the site of an Inn, that should form a sort of outer lodge to the Palace, for the behoof of those humble visitors who came thither to admire and wonder at a distance, and then pass on their way. And such seems to have been the order of succession in the present instance: first the bridge,—which is almost classically beautiful in its severe simplicity; then the Traveller's Rest,—catching the same tone and character—as beauty ever begets beauty;—and lastly, the little rural village—of which an Inn always forms the nucleus.

This exquisite little Inn bears date, over its low gothic portal, about the middle of the seventeenth century; yet is it as perfect in every feature as if it had been finished yesterday. Its style is the simplest form of the Gothic; its material, the beautiful rose-tinted sandstone of the district, freckled all over with those beauty-spots which no hand but that of Time can place to advantage, but in all other respects immaculate as if it had been preserved as a model under a glass case.

As a single object, there is nothing else in

this whole district so entirely pleasing as the little Inn at Rowsley, as it first offers itself to view on approaching the village from Matlock; half its low form being hidden by the flowering shrubs that everywhere clothe it as with a garment; its trim lawns and gay flowerbeds spreading all about it in easy negligence, like the embroidered skirts of that garment, except in front, where it advances, undraped, up to the very edge of the public way, as if to greet the traveller, and bid him welcome.

As we have, by rights, no business to enter this little village in our way to Chatsworth, the road thither branching off to the right immediately before reaching the bridge, we must no longer linger within sight of its pleasant walks, lest the breathing stillness of their sweet solitudes, (especially of that one of them which winds along by the river's brink, right into the Park of Chatsworth, without once calling up a hint of human dwelling or human doing, beyond the half-indicated foot-path on which you tread) should tempt us to lie down and ruminate the sweet fancies we have gathered there in times gone by, instead of hastening to feed afresh at the banquet of bright realities that awaits us on the other side of yonder sloping mound of smooth turf, which is all that now stands between us and Chatsworth;—like the green curtain that hides from the spectator, till the appointed moment, the opening scene of some spendid drama.

VI.

THE HOSTELRY.

As, unluckily, we do not possess, like the great enchanter in Thalaba, the faculty of passing through half-a-dozen gates at the same moment, we shall now take the liberty of transporting the reader to that particular entrance to the domain of Chatsworth which

is best calculated to obtain for it, in his imagination, that "local habitation" so necessary to the purpose for which we are met.

We have hitherto, be it observed, been approaching Chatsworth from the south, and have just pointed to it, as lying perdu behind the green hill that backs the lovely little pastoral village of Rowsley.

A wave of our author-itative wand, a wink of the "mind's eye" of our docile reader, and, lo! we stand together before the little dandified Inn (aping an Italian villa), that flanks the northern entrance to the park.

As it is "an ill wind that blows nobody good," so it must be an "air from heaven" itself that brings no ill upon its wings. We have seen some of the good that the atmosphere of Chatsworth breathes everywhere around it. All the ill we have been able to trace to it, in the course of a pretty long and close acquaintance, is confined within the

walls of the somewhat too-pretending hostelty of the Duke's own village of Edensor,—whose pillared porticos, carpetted saloons, carved and French-polished furniture, furbelowed draperies, and superfine waiting-gentlefolk, seem contrived and brought together for no purpose but to exemplify what a country inn should not be, in each and all of these particulars.

And we may be wrong in tracing even this error to the cause here assigned for it. There is a certain material which the cleverest fingers in fairydom could not manufacture into "a silk purse;" and the queen of all the fairies, with all her subject fairies to aid her, could make nothing better of Bottom than an ass. Let us be reasonable, then, and not expect that a Derbyshire Boniface can set up his final rest within a bow-shot of Chatsworth Palace, and remain deaf to the demon-whispers fof "taste." Moreover, being, as it were by special appointment, the Duke's own

some of the bachelor guests of Chatsworth are relegated for the night to his roof), he holds himself the prince of publicans, and comports himself accordingly.

But what a contrast to the little hostelry at Rowsley, where Isaac Walton himself would have delighted to "take his ease" of an evening, and hum the melody of his Milkmaid's Song, while he saw to the savoury cooking of his own barbel! Nay, perchance he did so luxuriate, angling from its little natural arbour overhanging the Derwent; eating his simple supper in the little cabin that looks on the public road; and reposing in the fragrant whiteness of its latticed dormitory overlooking the laurelled lawn. What more likely? for the Derwent was one of his favourite streams. Certes, every stone of its rustic porch and vestibule "prates of his whereabout;" every wall of the latter is hung to · this day with the implements of his gentlyungentle craft; every object about the place breathes the air of his divine book, or his book of them.

VII

A PATTERN VILLAGE.

ENTERING the Edensor gate of the Park, we cannot choose but be arrested, after the first few paces, by glimpses, through a pair of spacious iron gates on our right, of a scene which is unique in its way. Having looked upon it for the space of ten minutes, with impressions made up of a mystified mixture of doubt, curiosity, and a sort of uneasy pleasure which half persuades us to call it pain, we inquire of ourselves (there being nobody else at hand) what it is that we look on. Is it a scene in a play? Has the Duke, ever "on hospitable thoughts intent," been getting up -Love in a Village, al fresco, for the amuse-

ment of his guests, and is this the "scenery and decorations" of it, left standing, ready for a second performance?

The pleasant chimes of a little church that rises above us on the left, as we stand gazing, answer distinctly, No! And we must believe them: for that exquisite little temple of Christian worship is evidently "a true thing," whatever the cluster of what look like human dwellings may be—or what would look like human dwellings, if it were not that human creatures of the ordinary height could almost look down their delicate chimneys, while standing on their diminutive lawns; which latter, being studded here and there with miniature flower-beds, look like so many embroidered velvet waistcoat-pieces, spread out for choice!

Hark! a whistle from behind yonder green upland! As it does not cause the whole affair to split into two equal parts, and, moving away by some invisible agency, church and all, give place to something else, that

whistle cannot be the prompter's, and what we look upon is not one of the scenic illusions we at first took it for. What else then may it be? and to what end designed? The gate of entrance is open; there is nobody to say us nay; we will enter, and examine the scene a little more closely.

A broad, gravelled, carriage-road, but without a single mark of carriage-wheel to impeach the perfection of its level, leads windingly up a gentle ascent, either side of it being bounded by a raised footway of green, smooth-shaven turf, immediately adjoining the inner extremity of which rise the fanciful trellised boundaries, no two alike in pattern, of certain diminutive flower-gardens, growing diminutive flowers, and leading respectively to as many diminutive dwellings, no one of which has anything in common with its neighbour, except the marked resemblance that each and all of them bear to the pretty plaster of Paris light-houses that the Italian-

image-boys carry about London streets on;

Looking at each of these fairy-habitations separately, you fancy yourself peering, with one eye, through the peep-hole of those ingenious show-boxes by which certain house-beautifiers in Old Bond Street inveigle the unwary a long way from home "in search of the picturesque." Looking at the whole together, you may fancy them the deserted domiciles (got together by some strange magic) of all those youthful visionaries of the last London season, who commenced their married life with amiable idealities about "love in a cottage," and, being able to afford it, corrected their error before the end of the heneymoon.

And yet the unsullied brightness of every window, the immaculate whiteness of every drapery within, the perfect preservation of every flower and leaf without, not to mention the blue smoke that rises gracefully from .

the graceful chimnies of some few of these dwellings, forbid all idea of desertion. We must guess again.

Perhaps, then, the singular scene on which we look is the last, best work—the opus magnum—(carried into effect by favour of his friend the Duke) of a certain Prince Prettyman of the May-fair coteries of the last century, who, having come to his fortune after long waiting for it, felt that he must die immediately (as every body does under such circumstances), and being determined not to do so without benefiting his species, hit upon this method, in the shape of alms-houses for decayed dandies.

The guess is a happy one: but it evidently misses the mark. Were it as you suppose, the drawing-room window of each domicile (it being a soft summer's evening) would present the velvet-capped head, leaning on the jewelled hand, of its respective occupant,—as that of poor Brummel ever did under

similar circumstances, when he lodged over the little bookseller's shop in the Rue Royale at Calais. Whereas, here, there is no touch or sign of human or any other life; all is silent and motionless as the villages we wander through in dreams.

Yet not so. See! the window-sill, (till now vacant,) round which cluster those lovely roses of Provence and honey-suckles of England, is occupied by a snow-white cat. Can it be? Have we at last found or lost our way to the long-sought domain of the transformed princess in the prettiest of fairy tales? Instead of being, as we fancied ourselves, close to Chatsworth Palace, are we "fifteen thousand miles from everywhere;"— as Planché's pretty version of the tale intimates that fairy residence to be situated?

Reader or spectator of the unique scene that has so inopportunely stopped us in our progress, thy conjectures as to its use or destination would never hit the mark, shouldst thou guess till doomsday. You give it up?

Learn, then, that this romance in stuceo is neither more nor less than a real village, inhabited by real peasants and labourers, who, like other peasants and labourers, "live by bread," (ay, and bacon too, "though by your smiling you would seem to doubt it);" getting that bread and bacon by the sweat of their brow; growing their own cabbages and potatoes, (somewhere out of sight); brewing their own beer; marrying, multiplying, and performing all the other offices of ordinary men and women in the like station.

But no—the blank silence that reigns everywhere throughout this seemingly favoured
spot, even now that the labours of the day
are over, proclaims something apart from
ordinary village life—something, if not wrong,
too right, about this rural La Trappe,—where
the men, and the women too, seem to have
forgotten how to talk, the dogs how to bark,
the cats how to mew, and even the birds how

to sing: and as for the little children, they have evidently never come to their tongues at all—a "hush!" or an upheld finger, being the extent of their intercourse with their parents and with one another!

Seriously, this pattern village of Edensor is the prettiest idea imaginable—on paper; and there it is that the Duke must alone have contemplated it, before carrying the design of his architect into effect; or his fine natural taste would have predicted the almost painfully-artificial result.

The case is simply this: on the spot at present occupied by the model village of Edensor, there not long ago stood (within the very precincts of the park,) a squalid hamlet, comprising the usual amount of tumbledown cottages, reeking dung-heaps, dreary duck-ponds, draggletailed mothers, dowdy daughters, dirty-faced children, and all the accompanying ills and eyesores that English poverty is heir to; not forgetting the

usual proportion of those amiable inventions of modern legislation, where boor and beer are "licensed to be drunk on the premises":—in short, a very blotch upon the fair aristocratic face of Chatsworth; an unwholesome, unsightly eruption, for which, all ordinary modes of treatment being tried in vain, there was none left but the empirical one, of driving the disease inwards. And this, by the shallow counsel of his estate's physician, the good, kind, and generous Duke has adopted; little guessing the fatal result upon the national and it is likely to leave it from



a tenure, the conditions of which may be guessed from what we have observed while looking on this prettiest and most plausible of mistakes—which can only be described by negatives. It has no shops, no smithy, no "public," no pound, no pump;—no cage, no stocks; -no quoits, no single-stick, no wrestling, no kite-flying, no cricketing, no trapball, no pitch and toss, no dumps;—no shouting, no singing, no hallooing, no squabbling, no scolding; --- no love-making, no gossipping, no tittle-tattle, no scan—Yes! one thing the miserable denizens of this "happy village" have gained, in vice of their elevation in the scale of social life: they may scandalize one another to their hearts! content! And it is to be hoped that they do so: for what is left but scandal, to those whose lives must be conducted in a whisper?

VIII.

THE PARK AND THE PALACE.

Turning our backs (not reluctantly) upon the pretty, but ill-placed toy, which, we more than suspect, an eye to business, rather than to beauty and propriety, has caused to be foisted into one corner of Chatsworth Park, (an outrage not unlike hanging a Brummagem jewel in the ear of one of those noble female faces which mark the house of Burlington), the lovely expanse of the park itself opens before us in all its stately simplicity, and with an air so purely English, yet so perfectly classical, that one is tempted to inquire how it is that the two epithets admit of a "yet" coming between them.

Deferring the reply to this inquiry till we have nothing better to do than to seek it, let us observe, how nobly the view opens out on

the right and left, as we advance,—showing, as far as the eye can scan the scene as a whole, one unbroken expanse of turf, embroidered at intervals by distant groups of beech, or elm, or oak, that look as if they were artificially worked into that rich velvet robe, to relieve its uniformity; or (still more beautiful) here and there is one standing in that "single blessedness," in which those noblest denizens of inanimate nature are alone capable of attaining the true amount of their stately birthright.

This beautiful expanse, vast as it is, at no point extends beyond the limit that it pleases and satisfies the eye to compass at one view, in a scene of this nature. At the precise point where, if extended further, it would pass that limit, the rising ground on all sides becomes clothed in dense umbrageous groves, (not woods, which present a less cultivated aspect,) opening here and there towards their lower skirts, into short glades; but, as they ascend the heights which close in the view all

around, they usurp the entire empire of the soil, and present one unbroken mass of foliage, swelling into cloud-like heaps, of more or less breadth and density, according to the varied nature of their character, and the soil they crown.

Another few paces, and we perceive that what has hitherto appeared one vast unbroken expanse of turf, is, at the foot of the soft declivity to which we have now advanced, divided into two nearly equal portions, by a lovely river, that lapses coolly and quietly through it, for the most part visible throughout its course, but at two or three intervals hidden by small detached companies of beeches, and patches of underwood, that overhang its brink on either side. perceive, too, that the turf is irregularly intersected, on both sides of the stream, by a winding road, white as snow, but so managed, as to the course it takes in relation to the . perpetual undulations of the ground, that its

almost startling whiteness never interferes with that general tone of softness and repose which is the pervading character of the scene. The effect of these roads is (quite by accident, probably,) singularly pleasing. It reminds one of a ribbon of virgin white, wreathed into the profuse tresses of some otherwise unadorned beauty, whose face would, in the absence of this relief, be in some measure eclipsed by the too profuse splendour of its natural ornament.

And, lo! that face itself now bursts upon us suddenly, in all its supreme fairness, basking luxuriously in the declining sunlight, on the bosom of that soft acclivity which rises from the river's brink, and which the last few paces have brought within our view.

Having thus (chiefly, we confess, for our own delectation,) brought the indulgent reader face to face with the immediate scene of our general narrative, we, as in duty bound, humbly

there assembled, as intimated at the opening of our acquaintance with the reader. Henceforth, of us there will no more be heard in these records than if we were existent only in that limbo of the imagination from which nothing is ever capable of removing us but those scenes and objects of external nature which we could not help encountering on our journey hither. Henceforth (so far as these pages are concerned) we live but in the thoughts and sentiments and imaginations that we have undertaken to record: and he who does more or other than this, can be no fitting, because no faithful recorder.

IX.

A GENIUS.

It is the evening of a rich autumnal day in the latter end of the August of 18—. (This is the nearest approximation to a specific date that the exigencies of our narrative either admit or require.) You observe that range of lofty gilded windows, each composed of two plates only of glass, which seem to look upon us proudly, athwart that stately lawn, with their great eyes glittering in the yellow light of the setting sun. That is the library of Chatsworth Palace; and within it are assembled, from some accidental circumstance arising out of the recent after-dinner conversation, the little company to which the reader was on the point of being introduced when he was first invited to listen to these records,

Let us enter, and see of whom the company consists.

Truly, a goodly assemblage to look upon! And even in this, how nobly does it vindicate the power of intellect over matter! The supreme superiority, in personal appearance, of the English aristocracy over all the rest of the nation, is universally admitted. But the superiority, in this particular, of the aristocracy of intellect over that of birth, is still greater: for, to the former rule there are exceptions; but to the latter, none. There be plebeians, both male and female, who might compete for the palm of personal beauty with the Cavendishes, the Howards, or the Tollemaches. But this is confined to the beauty of form: the beauty of intellect, nothing but the actual presence of intellect ever yet communicated.

What a noble head is that, bending slightly aside and downward, as if the face (which we cannot see) were directed to the ground,

in token of some absorbing thought, that presses on the mind within! The rich curls (black as night) that cluster over it, the attitude, and the fixed repose of the whole figure, give to it the look of a clothed Antinous.

Who is it dares to indulge in a brown study, in such a company as this? It can only be, and it is, the "genius" of his day—of a day in which, but for him, genius would be a dead letter,—so effectually does its would-be nurse, Civilization, swathe, and dandle, and polish, and petrify it, during its infancy and non-age, into the ordinary and accepted form and bearing demanded by the exigencies of social life: so that now-a-days we meet with persons who, having been intended by nature for geniuses, are actually gentlemen.

The personage before us, Mr. Tressyllian. Toms, is not one of these: he is a genius, and therefore no gentleman.

In the code which regulates the etiquette of a Court like that now assembled at

Chatsworth,—a Court which acknowledges no aristocracy but that of intellect,—Genius, under whatever name and form it present itself, and whatever garb it wear, claims the pas of all other pretensions: and Mr. Tresyllian Toms is, as we have said, a genius. To Mr. Tressyllian Toms, therefore, we beg to introduce the reader personally, first and foremost of our gay and brilliant company. ". Was there ever such a jumble of anomalies and contradictions as Tressyllian Toms! name, (as names, somehow or other, not seldom do-probably because they have a hand in the matter,) in some sort pronounced his character; which was an incomprehensible Olla Podrida of all imaginable contradictions. He was at once a poet and a petitmaitre; a philosopher and a fashion-monger; a true wit and a trifling word-catcher; a compound of wisdom and folly, of brilliance and blundering, of sense and nonsense, of elegance and awkwardness, of natural refinement and natural vulgarity.

There was a "contradiction in terms," even in the physiognomy of Tressyllian Toms: if you looked at him en profile, he reminded you of a Roman hero of past times, or a Greek rebel of present ones; if you met him unexpectedly, face to face, you might have chanced to mistake him for the keeper of a menagerie of wild beasts—the man who puts his head into the lion's mouth.

For the rest,—Mr. Tressyllian Toms dressed like a player, harangued like a mountebank, thought like a sage, felt like a hero, and wrote like an angel—or if not, certes like no other mere "human mortal."

a fop and a fashion-monger: but the sagacious reader will not have so mistaken our estimate of his character as to suppose that he was either of these, or that he was anything else, in the ordinary acceptation of the terms. We have described him generally as "a genius;" consequently, whatever form or garb that

attribute might assume for the nonce, it was always put on "with a difference" from that of other people;—and in the particular in question, the difference was remarkable. If Mr. Tressyllian Toms paid allegiance at the footstool of Fashion, it was in the manner in which a certain class of modern lovers pay court to their mortal mistresses,—by thwarting all their desires, and setting their most solemn decrees at defiance. He followed the fashion, as a cockney sportsmen follows the hounds—by running over them. If the ungracious truth must be confessed, Mr. Tressyllian Toms was something of a cockney in most things.

If, again, our friend was, intellectually as well as physically speaking, a fop, it was only because he objected to think, to do, or to be, anything like the rest of mankind. If his lot had been cast in the dark ages of the human mind, or in those semi-bright ones which preceded them, he would have been the founder and the prophet of a new religion,

or a new code of morals,—a Mahomet, or an Ignatius Loyola. Living in a period when the existence of a Deity has been reduced to a mathematical demonstration, and a future world is the necessary corollary from a present one, he fancied (and to his private friends proclaimed) himself an Atheist.

It may be suspected that in all great geniuses there is an infusion, more or less, of quackery. In our genius it was more than a soupçon. In a word, Mr. Tressyllian Toms was the most brilliant and accomplished of quacks—a sort of Coleridge, Cagliostro, and Admirable Crichton, rolled into one.

This mention of the greatest man, in a purely intellectual point of view, that our day has produced,—for such, with all his faults and errors, Coleridge undoubtedly was,—erminds us of another particular, besides his spice of quackery, in which the "genius" of our Chatsworth party resembled that extraordinary personage. He would talk—

ye gods, how he would talk! In a word, he would have dumb-tounded Coleridge himself, —who talked all the rest of the world to a stand-still.

From all this it will readily be concluded that Mr. Tressyllian Toms enjoyed the enviable distinction of being at once "the glory, jest, and riddle" of the fashionable, the political, and the literary worlds of his day, severally and respectively.

X.

THE LADY BAB BRILLIANT.

OBSERVE that lady, with the sparkling face and Circassian form, who sits ensconced in the deep recesses of that luxurious reading-chair, listening to the handsome dandy who hangs over her, as if his words were the inspirations of that poetry which looks from her own eyes;—whereas they are only the

newest club-engendered scandal, or at best some of the elaborate nothings of fashionable small-talk which he has perchance picked up (without knowing it) from her own last new novel.

That is the Lady Bab Brilliant; the most accomplished writer that her own sex has hitherto produced; and the only one whose pen ever acquired the power of a man's, without losing the ease and grace of a woman's. She is the Millamant at once of letters and of fashionable life,—uniting into one coherent whole a host of seeming contradictions;—the wit and vivacity of a Wortley Montagu, the sagacity and worldly wisdom of a Du Deffand, the heart and social affections of a Sevigné, the penetrating spirit of a De Staël, and the varied accomplishments of all these.

The Lady Bab Brilliant, though she had always been beautiful, had never before united in her face and form so many varied attractions as now: for though she had passed

that "dolce primavera" so dear to dreaming poets and decaying dandies, she had only just attained that "bella eta del'oro" until the advent of which women always lack a something, either in expression, in manner, in mise, or in tournure, to satisfy the cravings of a really cultivated and consummate taste.

The position of Lady Bab Brilliant in the World of Fashion was a singular one. There is not a vice or folly on which that singular microcosm piques itself, that she had not pierced through and through with the winged arrows of her wit, or scourged with the keen lash of her satire, or "turned the seamy side without" by the breath of her indignant scorn;—not a class to which the barbed shafts of her ridicule did not cling thick and three-fold;—scarcely an individual ill-doer who had not appropriated to his or her own particular wearing one or other of the innumerable specimens of head-gear which she had scattered about in lavish profusion, for

the especial wearing of anybody they might chance to fit.

And yet the Lady Bab Brilliant was the very pet and idol of that world which her pen had contributed, more than all others united, to cover with the ridicule, and brand with the scorn, of the wise and good!

What was the explanation of this seeming anomaly?—Simply that the Lady Bab Brilliant, not only did not pretend to be any better than her friends and associates, but in reality was no better. She was in truth an epitome, in herself, of all the fashionable follies, and not a few of the fashionable vices, (so called, but not by her or us) which she had so effectually held up to public contempt and indignation, that they would have been ashamed to show their faces, even in the salons of May Fair, if she herself had not kept them in countenance there, by cherishing each in turn, and paying especial court to those of her associates who did the like. Her

principle, in regard to the small morals of society was—Measures, not Men. She argued, with a good-natured ingenuity all her own, that the vice lies in the dice, not in the dicers; that if there were no vices there could be no vicious people! Accordingly, she was as unsparing in her castigation of all fashionable crimes and misdemeanors (her own included) as she was infinite in her toleration of all fashionable wrong-doers—still not omitting her dear self. She was a sort of female Sheridan, —herself the exemplar of all the social errors she satirised with her pen and her tongue,—

Herself the great original she drew-

(without knowing it). And be it expressly understood, that she was no less the exemplar of their good qualities than their bad ones, —still without knowing it.

XI.

THE LION.

Though it will be quite impossible, even for the most inquisitive and penetrating of readers, to fix the precise date of our Chatsworth records, it is nevertheless in any case dangerous to describe in detail the exact personel of those characters who figure in true fictions like ours;—seeing that no precautions can prevent the reader from falling into the unpardonable impertinence (palming it off upon the portrait-painter—) of fixing the likenesses—especially those which are not flattering ones—upon their particular friends and acquaintance, or (most impertinent of all) claiming possession of one themselves.

If it were not for this, we should have felt it our duty to favour the world with minute delineations of the "complement extern" of all our dramatis personæ; for nothing else so marks and fixes them in the imagination of that most flighty of all abstractions, a modern reader of modern fiction. But, as we would especially eschew the imputation of painting anything but "historical" pictures, we shall abstain from the minute details in question, even in the case of Reginald Beltravers,—and bid our readers, after having (if they can) gathered from our sketch a portrait of his intellect, "see his visage in his mind;" just as could they see his visage, they might gather his mind from that; for no two things of distinct natures were ever so typical the one of the other.

Reginald Beltravers was the Crichton, not merely of his circle, but of his day; the most accomplished writer of the most accomplished era of English letters:—practising all styles and classes of composition, and eminent in all;—Novelist, Dramatist, Poet, Historian, Moral Philosopher, Essayist, Critic, Political

Pamphleteer: in each superior to all others, and only rivalled in each by himself.

"Ay"— faintly ejaculates one of the Lord Fannies among our May-fair readers,—"the Lion of your Chatsworth menagerie. Well—I don't object to these literary monsters now and then—in the country. They can tell one all about the statues and pictures. They come in very well at a pinch, on a rainy morning, between the rubbers at billiards. I have even known them help out a drowsy dish of politics from the old ones, after dinner. Yes, your Lion may be suffered for once and away—in the country—in spite of his odd tournure, his queerly trimmed whiskers, and even his incomprehensible coat and unspeakable boots."

But hark in your ear, most sweet and fair Lord Fanny. Our Lion—can you conceive it?—was not only by birth and station, but by look and bearing, a finished gentleman. Nay, so "express and admirable" was his entire vol. 1.

outward man, that, when the fit was on him, it should go hard but he would pass, even in the saloons of Chatsworth, for as much of a fribble and "a man of fashion" as your gracious and graceful self! It was in truth his besetting foible—or forte—which you will. There were times when, as he lounged languidly from his cab, up the steps of the Athenæum, one might mistake him (not seeing the intellect and passion pictured in his marble face) for the lay man of some "eminent" tailor.

We have said that our eccentric friend. Toms was a genius. Such, with all his gifts and accomplishments, was not Reginald Beltravers;—though perhaps no one else ever touched so closely upon the verge of that intellectual Charybdis, without tumbling into it. The consequence was, that although, like his friend Toms, he was a category of contradictions, they did not take the shape ("if shape it could be called which shape had.

none") of an incongruous jumble, but of a consistent system of inconsistency.

Multiplied as were his points of strength, Reginald Beltravers had a weakness to match every one of them. He was the most radical and levelling of politicians, yet the most aristocratic and noli-me-tangere of men. He was the most careful and profound of thinkers, and the most calm and cool of reasoners, yet the most inept of actors in the affairs of life. He loved human nature with the love of an ardent poet, and an enlightened philosopher, yet hated or despised every man, woman, and child of which it is made up. Proud as Lucifer, he nevertheless paid court to the meanest and most vulgar, for a smile or a sigh—a good word, or the suppression of a bad one. Of all the noble qualities of his mind, his eloquence was the most noble; yet he could not utter two extempore phrases viva voce, without boggling or taking To the burning enthusiasm of a youthful poet he joined the cold severity of a world-wearied anchorite. There never was a more thorough man of the world, in the most worldly (but not the vulgar) sense of the phrase; yet was he at the mercy of every impulse; eager as a child—passionate as a woman—fickle as fire—light as air—unstable as water.

But we are fain to break off in the middle of our sketch, lest the reader charge with being out of nature, a likeness of one of the most natural persons in the habitable world.

XII.

THE LADY PENTHEA.

Or all the shallow profundities of this most profoundly shallow age, commend us to the ignorant blunder which holds that, because there is more of falsehood and artificiality than there ever was before in human society, there is, therefore, less of truth and natureless of poetry and passion. Will anybody show us, in the records of the dark ages, as they are called—ages when human society was pretty much what nature made it, only more savage,—when might and right were avowedly one,—when law was the will of the strongest,—will anybody pretend to point out to us, in the domestic history of those ages the ages, par excellence, of Romance—anything half so strangely romantic as the events which occur under our cognizance every day. we live, and the passions and actions that grow out of them? The heavens, forsooth, have ceased to be poetical, since Herschell discovered some of their sublime secrets, and made them "familiar as household words!"

This is not the mistake of poets, but the cant of prosers. No,—it is not ignorance, but knowledge, which engenders and elevates and spiritualizes that Romance which is ever the prevailing characteristic of our nature, under

its highest and purest condition of intellectual. development. Precisely in the ratio that we advance in true intellectual civilization, do we rise above the common-places of "this visible diurnal sphere," and breathe and have our being in the empyrean of Romance and Poetry.

Art thou yawning over our philosophy, good reader? Be it so!—but arouse thee at our living illustration of it, in the person of that "Dark Ladyée," who, statue-like, sits alone yonder, in the "dim religious light" of that embayed and painted window of the antelibrary, seeming, by her attitude, to be gazing forth upon the glories of the fairy landscape without; but in reality, while her bodily sense is blind to all around, her mental vision is fixed, with a fatal pertinacity, on her own strange and sad destiny—more sad, more strange, than that of the most ideal heroine of the wildest romance.

From her cradle to the present hour the Lady Penthea has been lapped in all the

Inxuries, and pillowed amid all the splendours, that appertain to (and constitute) the highest grade of artificial life. And what have they made her? Doubtless one of those embroidered common-places of which her sphere is so full—one of those elegant incarnations of insipidity and indifference conjoined, which have made English aristocratic life in the nineteenth century the ughing stock of Europe. Alas, for the Lady Penthea, that it is not so! They have made her, or at least helped to make her, a creature more embued with the spirit and essence of Romance, than any period but one of ultracivilization could have produced.

If we could dare to record the "strange eventful history" of this child of passion and poetry, it would perchance put to shame all the fictions that are to follow, of our own illuminati.

But this eternal blazon may not be, To ears of flesh and blood! —at least to the long ones which we must be content to look for among those very "gentle" readers who (we are told) form the staple of a modern romancer's auditory.

As however it is probable that the Lady Penthea will play a part in our future drama, we are bound to describe her,

Yet who shall fitly describe the Lady Penthea?—she of the desolate soul—the seared spirit—the blighted, the broken heart;—yet moving on, amidst the brilliant frivolities, the inane nothingness, the dazzling falsehoods, of fashionable life,—like her in the old Drama, who, in her mortal agony, kept whirling round and round in the mazes of the court dance, while successive messengers whispered tidings in her ear that turned her heart into stone! Like her, the Lady Penthea moved through the giddy dance of fashionable life, with a worse ill within her breast than the fire-tortured victims in the Hell of Vathek—moved proudly, nay, serenely on, weakly de-

serted by her own sex, basely denounced by ours; a doomed, yet an "undying" one still!

Bright and beautiful in early youth as a houri of the Eastern paradise; soft and soulentrancing as the priestess of a Hindu temple; yet with the intellect and the passion of a De Staël; the Lady Penthea was married, in early life,—(say not that she married, for it was not her doing-), to a man who fancied that he loved her, (for who could look upon her and not so fancy?) but who in reality loved and could love nothing, but his humour, his ease, and his dinner;—to a man whom she never even fancied that she loved. (This was her only error;—call it a crime if you will; for it was an act which almost merited the punishment it met with.) So wedded, she had passed through the glittering vulgarities of the great world, even to the day when we now look upon her, a being ALONE; —despising those she smiled upon; feared and hated by those who smiled upon her; with no companion but her imagination, no friend but her pride, no refuge but her pen, no confidant but that great public which she despised still more, (and, in her case, more justly,) than the smal one among which she moved.

In a word, the Lady Penthea was the Byron of her sex, without any of Byron's intellectual errors and deficiencies; with as much of Byron's poetical powers as any woman can possess without ceasing to be one; and no touch of his personal littleness and weakness.

Ask not what business the Lady Penthea has in such a company as this in which we now meet her. She was and is the life and soul, the crowning ornament, the noblest flower in the Corinthian capital of that society, which seems, for the time-being, to call back some touch and tone of that spirit of life which expired within her when she yielded up her outraged fame to those most

remorseless of all furies, the scandal-mongers of May-fair.

Nevertheless she still haunts those scenes; moving among them apart and alone, like the sainted Margaret amid the insane devilry of the Hartz Mountains; as pure in heart as she, as passionless (now); as seeming cold; as dead to all around;—yet unlike her, "with a fire in her heart and a fire in her brain;" quenchless,—for it is fanned for ever by the immortal breath of ideal love; unconsuming,—for it is fed by fuel not of the earth's growth.

XIII.

SIR PROTEUS PLUME.

THE Lady Penthea, as she sits apart and self-absorbed, is addressed by a person whose appearance may puzzle the most accomplished physiognomist,—so entirely does he wear the aspect, and seem destined to

play the part, of an embodied negation. And it is by negatives alone that we shall attempt to describe him. Sir Proteus Plume (so is he called) is certainly not a genius; for he dresses, and moves, and thinks, and speaks, and acts, like a gentleman. is certainly not a "gentleman;" for he has been seen walking the streets arm in arm with a genius in dilapidated attire. is not a literary lion; for nobody flatters him to his face, and reviles him behind his back. He is not a fashionable poet; for he does not get people into corners, and practise his last sonnet upon them. He is not a fashionable reviewer; for people do not get him into corners, and worm puffs out of him for themselves or their protegés. He is not a politician; for while he believes that a great many of the leading Whigs are knaves, he is far from disbelieving that not a few of the leading Tories are fools. He is not a wit; for he never sacrifices a friend that he loves, to

win the smile of a fool that he despises. He is not a philosopher; for he never immolates truth upon the altar of a theory. He is not——

READER, (somewhat impatiently,) "Enough!
—you have already told us that he is not
anything,—a negation."

Pardon us, gentlest of objectors. We told you no such thing;—only that, from his outward seeming, he may chance to be mistaken for one. But as you are evidently weary of hearing what he is not, and as it does not consort with our present purpose to tell you what he is, we will only add that behind that brow of marble, and those features, motionless and (while motionless) expressionless as a mask, there lies an intellect fraught with all pure thoughts and noble aspirations, and fashioned into shapes of almost ideal perfection; and within that cold, rigid, statue-like form there couches a heart, so gentle that it melts at an infant's tears, yet so strong that it

would not quail at a nation's cry, if wrongfully raised against him; so capacious that it compasses in its folds the entire human race, yet of such contractile power that the few friends ("two or one") who are admitted within its inner shrine, feel as if they alone occupied and filled the temple.

XIV.

THE BOY POET.

OBSERVE the youth who is seated in the deep recess of yonder window, withdrawn and apart from all that brilliant company,—unknowing, for the moment, of everything in the wide world but his own thoughts, and unknowing even of them, but as faint and vague echoes and reflections of those feelings which make up the sum of a boy-poet's life and soul. See! his lithe, fragile form is bending over a book, that is spread open on

his knees,—his head drooping towards it like a plucked flower. The pale face is resting on he clasped hand,—over which, and all round the small exquisitely modelled head, fall heavy waves of auburn hair, concealing all but one pale cheek—pale and cold as marble, but smooth and soft as a girl's.

Dead to all the brilliant nothings that are passing around him, the boy-poet has fallen upon some passage of his (just at present) sole idol in the temple of poetry, Milton, and is either lapped in the Elysium of its divine music, or lost in the mazes of its marvellous imagery, or transfixed by the flaming sword of its majestic eloquence.

Strange, you say, to meet a mere school-boy in so accomplished a circle as that which now graces the gilded halls of Chatsworth. But though in this goodly company, he is not of it. Thus it is:—our excellent host, who loved him for his father's sake, had invited him hither, to run wild, for the rest of the sunshiny

season, among the lovely lawns and groves and glades and pastures of this fair domain; hoping thereby to recruit that shattered health which he will presently so need, in his 'life-and-death-struggle for those University honours on which (poor boy!) he is about to stake his soul and body.

In the mean time, the last change that has come over the spirit of the boy-dreamer is one that threatens to wake him into that everlasting dream which, when it once takes possession of the soul, holds it captive for life. Last year he owned no mistresses but the exact sciences; admitted of no virtue or verity but what resolved itself into "the loves of the triangles;" and had very nearly squared the circle! The year before, he had dived so far into the heart and mystery of Matter, that the Philosopher's stone was within his mind's grasp, and the Elixir Vitæ was a thing more than "probable to thinking." The year before that, Art was his

only idolatry—a marble statue, or a canvass Madonna, his only "beauteous and sublime of human life."—At present, as we have hinted, he is a poet. We would not swear that next year he will not be a person of sound common sense; the year after that, a debater at the Cambridge Union; the year afterwards, a Senior Wrangler; and—

Oh, most lame and impotent conclusion!

he will in all human probability signalize his arrival at "years of discretion," by a Tory harangue from a popular hustings, or a Whig article in the Edinburgh Review!

We have said that Milton was, for the moment, the sole idol of our boy-poet. But even Milton he regarded, not as a poet, but only as the nearest practical approach to the great poetical archetype existing in his own mind; and, if he worshipped him, it was as an idol, not as a god. Compared with all other poets (so called) he regarded Milton as

a demi-god compared with mere men. But tried by the test of the poetry born of his own dreams, Milton himself "came tardy off."

We have said, also, that just at present he was a poet. But it was in feeling and aspiration only, not in act. He thought of poetry as of a thing so utterly ethereal, and of the mind, that he scarcely regarded it in esse at all—only in posse; a thing to be created, or educed out of created things, in the fulness of time, but not as yet a living entity—a faith, not a fact—an aspiration of

The prophetic soul

Of the wide world, dreaming on things to come;

not an accomplished purpose. He believed in it, as he believed in the ultimate perfectibility of man, and that they would come together—or rather, that each would necessarily bring or include the other. He looked upon Plato as the nearest to a poet of any human being that ever lived;—partly because he never wrote a line of poetry; but chiefly

because he excluded poets (so called) from his ideal of a Republic: for our boy-poet held that all voritten poetry, even the highest and purest, does but lower and debase, rather than exalt and refine, that idea of the Poet, which he believed in, as he believed in the idea of the Gedhead—both being conceptions incapable of expression by words, or even by thoughts—only of being felt. Poetry was to him not merely "a light that never was on sea or land," but a light that never was at all;—a thing to be: "the all-hail hereafter!" the great problem of human nature,—not to be solved, but in the immortal courts of Heaven.

Our boy-dreamer believed that if any writer of recent times had obtained glimpses of what poetry is, and had succeeded in putting them into words, it was Wordsworth; and he only in his "Ode on Immortality."

Not naked, or alone,
But trailing clouds of glory, do we come,
From God, who is our home!
Heav'n lies about us in our infancy.

Shades of the prison-house begin to close

Upon the growing boy;

But he beholds the light, and whence it flows

He sees it in his joy.

This, he thought, went nearer to solve the problem of poetry than anything else that man had ever put into words: and he reverenced Wordsworth accordingly. But Wordsworth's writings in general he looked upon as something very like an antagonism to Poetry—an Egotism, instead of an Idealism—the petty thoughts and feelings and associations of an individual man, as opposed to the one great conception of our human nature, as emanating from, and existing in, its Creator.

Consistently with this idea, if he had been called upon to embody Poetry in effigy, through the medium of Painting or Sculpture, he would have given it a form, not of Apollonian beauty, and immortal youth, but of immortal infancy—the face alone of a sleeping infant—sleeping,—but dreaming;—an infant's

face in the sky, dreaming, amidst those "clouds of glory" which its Creator had breathed about it, and which the first touch of earth would melt and dissipate.

By all this the staid and judicious reader will gather that our boy-poet had reached that most trying period of an enthusiast's existence,—the moment when the visions of youth have passed away, and the realities of manhood have not come into view. And there for the present we must leave him.

XV.

A SLIGHT MISTAKE.

READER. "But your hero and heroine? pray accept our impatience as a compliment: but where be your hero and heroine? These marvellously clever people that you have introduced to us,—these new illuminati,—are all very well for one of Lady Bethnal-Green's

menagerie meetings: but you have not brought us to Chatsworth, of all places in the world—Chatsworth,—the very Parthenon among the temples in which Fashion is worshipped—you have not brought us hither to meet boypoets, Byron ladies, geniuses who are not gentlemen, and gentlemen who are neither one thing nor another. We are in the heart of your first volume, and yet appear to be considerably further from encountering the personages proper to a 'fashionable novel' than when we joined you in your opening chapter."

Pardon us, gentles! There has been some mistake. A fashionable novel? Why it is precisely because, at the period to which our records refer, fashionable novels had grown into the Aaron's rod of prose fiction, and were swallowing up all the rest—it is precisely this which gave occasion to the scenes and circumstances presently to be recorded. And yet you are looking for a fashionable novel at our hands!

Really, the mistake is none of ours!; and we can but proceed in our appointed course. Thus much however we can promise,—that, should the illuminati (any or all of them) who claim your attentive ear on the present occasion, fail to obtain it on the point of "form" (which is by no means improbable), they pledge themselves, through us, their humble amanuensis, never to trouble you any more, unless under the shape that you delight to honour;—for, "being reasonable," they cannot dispute that readers are to the full as essential a condition to a book fulfilling its end as writers are, and therefore have a right to "a voice potential" in the matter.

In the mean time, as the next best thing to seeing one's friends honoured is to hear them abused, you may perchance like to stay and listen to the uncivil things said against your favourite reading, by the illuminati assembled in the library at Chatsworth on the occasion in question, and learn what happened in consequence.

XVI.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

"The thing may be explained in three words, as most other things may, if one would but take the trouble," said Mr. Tressyllian Toms oracularly, to the little circle who had gathered round him in the library at Chatsworth, on the evening we have chosen for the opening of our records. "Nay, it explains itself;—it stands rubric on the title-page of every prose fiction of the day."

"In the title-page? As how?" inquired Reginald Beltravers, who laid down the book he had been seeming to read, and languidly joined the little coterie.

"Why," replied Toms, "be their grade, subject, object, design, material, author, or publisher, what they may, do they not all agree in placarding themselves—'in three volumes'?"

"But what harm is there in three volumes?" asked Beltravers, drily.

"None," replied Toms, "any more than there is good, in that, or in any other particular number. If therefore you ask, Why not three volumes? I reply, Why three volumes?"

"Well," said Beltravers, "for my part I think three is the only perfect number—in Novels as in everything else."

"So do I," said Toms, patronisingly, "when you adopt it;—because, having determined to write three volumes, you write them. But the rest of the tribe, having but one to write, insist on writing it into three; and for this reason forsooth—that publishers will have it so! Thus, all the good (and it is not a little) that has been done during the last hundred years by transferring the patronage of literature from lords to publishers, has been more than undone by their vile invention of this Procrustes bed for prose fiction."

"May one ask," said Sir Proteus quietly, addressing Toms, "what is your specific quarrel with 'three volumes?" What is it that you charge them with in particular? I am not going to take their part: but the form of publication assumed by the Scotch Novels, may at least claim to be accused in terms capable of being replied to. That Mr Tressyllian Toms does not like that form of composition, is, I admit, prima facie evidence against it; but to lack his good opinion is not a legal crime."

"If it were," exclaimed Beltravers, "the Lord Chancellor help the writing community!
—for they'd every man of them be in a premunire—and the women too. If you want his good word, you must die for it. But Sir Proteus is quite right, Toms; and so, I'm afraid, are you—only you like to be right all to yourself, and so will not set others right."

"Not in this case, at all events," said Toms:
"to prove which, I'll make a bargain with

you. I'll prove to you, as clear as that three times one does not always make three, that the three-volume system of prose fiction is the most pestilent literary invention of modern times; provided, when so proved, you'll promise to help me in putting it down."

"Easier said than done," observed Sir Proteus.

said, in a case like this, where the fashion to be abolished has arisen out of an accidental, not an inherent quality, in the thing to which it is applied;—like the laurel crown invented by Cæsar to conceal his baldness; or the Emperor Hadrian's revival of beards, to mask an ugly mark in his own face; or the Chinese Empress Takeya's decree against the use of feet by her female subjects, because she had a club one; or the monstrous ruff of Elizabeth's time, invented to hide an aristocratic wen."

"But," asked Beltravers, "could such a system as that which you describe have main-

tained itself to the present day, by anything short of a miracle?"

"No," responded Toms, triumphantly, "by nothing but one of those miracles which genius alone can bring about. Need I tell you that, just as three-volume-novel-writing had grown effete, and was sinking into a bye-word of contempt and ridicule, the greatest genius of modern times willed to lift the art from the slough of obloquy into which it was on the point of falling, to a height and dignity that no one but himself had ever dreamed of its attaining. He willed to do this —and he did it. He found the art on a level with the lowest grade of penny-a-lining, and he lifted it to an eminence only just below that of Epic poetry. But I'm afraid the world will have little cause to thank him for the feat, even taking into account all the delight it has gathered from the means by which he brought it about:—for the decrepit and superannuated patient on which the operation was perormed, instead of being rejuve nated and radcally cured of its complicated ills, by the new blood thus infused into its veins, did but gain thereby a new lease of its old and dilapidated life, and a new locality in which to drone and drivel out its lengthened span. The prodigious and deserved success of the Scotch novels has but changed the venue of the offence of three-volume-novel-writing, from the commonplaces of daily life to the common-places of history; and the offenders, instead of filching the raw materials of their manufacture from their friends and acquaintance, lay hands on them as they find them, ready made up for use, in books of (so called) history. And I don't know whether, of the two, it is not a more mischievous act, to falsify historical facts and characters, than to misinterpret those of ordinary life: for in one case the world has an instinct to go by, such as it is; but in the other it must perforce depend on books, and believe what they tell it. And the result in

the present case is, that the readers of historical rical novels take their notions of an historical personage or period from directly opposite representations of them in novels, and (like the people who read the Edinburgh and Quarterly on the same book) believe both!"

Mr. Toms's hearers being fairly astonished into silence by this unlooked-for outbreak, he, after taking breath for a few moments, was left at liberty to resume his tirade.

"And do you suppose that true fame—such for instance, as you, Beltravers, aspire to—is to be achieved by such means as go to the making of a modern circulating-library fiction?

—You need not—as I see you are going to do—instance such names as those of Cervantes and Fielding, for I shall not admit them to be cases in point. The Don Quixotte is not a faction at all, in the sense in question;—it is a comic prose poem—a better sort of Hudibras;—it is the noblest satire that ever was written, because the freest from ill-will towards

the things satirized. Still less are the (so called) novels of Fielding fit to be described as fictions; for they embody the concentrated spirit of the truth of an entire social era."

"But Robinson Crusee and Gulliver?" interposed Sir Proteus, inquiringly,—"I suppose you will allow them to rank as fictions: and they have achieved fame enough."

"Yes," responded Toms, "but have left their authors without it, in the popular application of the term. And it is much the same with the noble comic Epic of the Spaniard; there are thousands of readers of Don Quixotte who never knew, nor desired to know, by whom it was written; and not one in a hundred of the readers of Robinson Crusoe and Gulliver ever heard of Defoe or Swift. This is true fame:—whereas a mere NAME,—like that, for instance, which Byron will be fifty years hence,—is but the shadow of it."

"Then you admit that both name and fame may be acquired by means of a prose fiction?" asked Beltravers.

"Yes; but it required a Scott to accomplish it; and it was done, not by means of the form of composition he chose to adopt, but in spite of it."

It was so unusual for Mr. Toms, when once he began an harangue, to "pause for a reply," that though he evidently did so on the present occasion, his hearers showed no immediate disposition to interpose. Indeed it was clear that he had inclined them rather to consider than to controvert this new crotchet (for so they nevertheless thought it) which had so suddenly taken possession of him. After a brief pause, however, Sir Proteus, as if desirous that the discussion might not drop, observed,—

"But let me again, my dear Toms, call you back to the question I took the liberty of asking just now. What is your specific charge against the only Muse we moderns have to our back? What 'ignorant sin' has the lady committed, that—"

"What committed?" echoed Toms, ab-

ruptly interrupting the placid inquirer, and blazing forth, as he spoke, into a degree of earnestness, and even vehemence, strangely at variance with the subdued tone usually heard within those halls of fashionable indifference;—

"What committed?—Has she not, by her meretricious blandishments, and the easy price at which she bestows her favours, banished he simplicity and purity of the olden time from out the land? To drop the nonsensical metaphor into which you have entrapped me, has not the system I complain of abolished hat once indispensable compact, between scholarship and authorship, which can alone preserve the offspring of the latter from becoming a bane rather than a blessing to a civilized community?

"Besides, who will labour, when to play brings more profit, and as much (present) honour? To write a perfect prose tale of passion and character, is nearly as difficult a task,

and one almost as rarely performed, (I am not. sure it may not be deemed as high an effort of intellectual power, and I am sure it may be turned to as high and noble moral purposes,) as to write a perfect tragedy. And was there aver such a tale written, of greater length than e few score pages? I do not believe it. I have never seen one, ancient or modern. It was never even attempted by the only story-tellers who have carried the art to a high pitch of perfection—the Arabian and the Italian ones. Nay, I do not believe it to be in the nature of things; any more than it is possible (and for the same reasons) to expand a tragedy beyond those limits to which the theory and practice of the greatest of human geniuses, confirmed by the settled award of time, have assigned it. Indeed, there is, and can be, no essential difference between a consummate drama and a consummate story,-no difference essentially affecting the results on the reader, or the circumstances on which those results

depend: I speak, of course, of a single and coherent narrative of a single and connected series of events, having some specific moral end in view, (whether exhibited or not,) and seeking that end by the collateral means of seizing the attention of the reader or spectator for a certain space of time, and during that time lifting his mind, and its affections and interests, above the ordinary pitch at which the realities of life hold it down under ordinary circumstances. That elevated tone of mind which is indispensable even to the comprehending, much more to the duly appreciating, a consummate tragedy, cannot be maintained beyond an extremely short period; and the limits of that period have been finally determined by the experience of ages. And precisely the same reasons apply in the case of a narrative fiction, as of a dramatic one, the necessary differences between the two being in form merely. So true is this, that there can be no drama that may not, with competent skill, be put into a narrative form, without materially affecting any of its results but the dramatic ones;—and no narrative that may not be 'dramatised,' without losing any of the qualities by which it affects the reader, except that merely accessory and unimportant one which it derives from its peculiar form.

"It follows that a narrative which aims at the highest purposes of prose fiction should be subjected to the same critical rules, in regard to unity of design, moral purpose, and practical length, which may be looked upon as finally settled, in the case of tragedy, by the joint consent of all accepted critics of all ages, and the practice of all the dramatic poets from whom those critics have drawn their rules. Each composition should occupy about the same space of time in the reading: a greater space than that occupied by a five-act tragedy being incompatible with the continuance of that condition of mind in the reader which is essential to the moral results

aimed at; and a less space being insufficient to the production of any permanent results whatsoever."

XVII.

LITERARY REFORMERS.

It is difficult to guess how much longer Mr. Tressyllian Toms would have continued his harangue;—for to talk was, as we have said, a necessity of his nature, and when he found himself "i' the vein," to stop of his own accord was a thing as undreamt of in his philosophy as it is in that of a rail-road locomotive. To talk was his vocation; and the fulfilment of our vocation is a virtue which, like all others, brings its own reward: consequently, the number and quality of his hearers, or whether he had any hearers at all, was a matter of perfect indifference to him. In this he resembled that most transcendant of

modern talkers, (and of writers too for that matter,) Coleridge; who, to do Toms justice, was his only worthy rival in the art. But Coleridge's talk was appreciable only by an audience of angels;—consequently, if these great rivals in the art of holding-forth should meet in realms where we are assoiled from the earthy part of our nature, and retain nothing but the divine, the transcendentalist will beat his competitor utterly out of the field. In the mean time, Toms had decidedly the best of it here below; for his hearers could (sometimes) understand him.

They had evidently understood him, more or less, on the present occasion,—Beltravers in particular,—who took the opportunity of a momentary pause attendant on a huskiness in Toms's not very tractable voice, to observe,—

"By Jove, Toms, you talk this well; so well that I wish you would adjourn the question, and let us have a regular discussion of it tomorrow. To tell you the truth, I have long

had a notion of proving to the world that the condition of prose fiction in England (like everything else) is exactly the reverse of what it ought to be; though what it ought to be, I have not yet quite settled. But you have helped me a good way towards the mark—so far, indeed, that if we can, on discussing the question again to-morrow, agree on two or three important collateral points, I'll offer you a share in a pet project of my own, which, if it do not 'reform altogether' the delinquencies of modern book-making, ought to do so;—which, to you and me, will be the same thing. What say you?"

"Before Mr. Toms says anything," interposed Lady Bab Brilliant, "allow me to claim a share in your discussion, and your project, too, if it likes me: for I, too, have a very pretty theory about prose fiction, and only want somebody to keep me in countenance, to work it out. Suppose we issue a manifesto,—or, still better, a manifestation,—or, best of all,

both—(given under our hands and seals, from the Palace of Chatsworth—there's nothing like the *prestige* of a name, to overawe that most presumptuous of pusillanimities, the public—) at once decreeing and demonstrating the principles upon which prose fiction should and shall henceforth be conducted. I like that notion of Mr. Toms' vastly, about limiting a tale to the length of a tragedy: only for 'Tragedy' I must be allowed to read 'Comedy.'"

To do Mr. Toms justice, he was not a little surprised at the turn things seemed to have taken. To produce any practical results by his talk, was what he never dreamed of. His talk, like that of lovers, was an end, not a means. Give him but one solitary listener; one, or a whole theatre full; a tête-à-tête at the Athenæum, or a Call of the House,—it was all one to him; he would talk you

From morn to noon, from noon to dewy eve, A summer's day; barring meals,—at which he was always prooundly silent,—from an instinctive sagacity, which told him that the two most important operations of life cannot be efficiently performed by the same organ at the same time: a forgetfulness of which is constantly spoiling the best dinners and the best discussions in town.

The thread of his discourse on the present occasion being prematurely cut, as above related, and the caoutchouc character of the material causing the ends to recede from one another, so as to preclude piecing, he readily acceded to the suggestion of Beltravers, and the party separated, till their re-union in the music-room; all bestowing themselves as their respective tempers prompted, during the half hour of twilight which the close of the evening had still left them.

Mr. Toms, for instance, betook himself to a solitary saunter in the noble wood backing the Palace; there to practise, upon the "green-robed senators" of the same, the exordium of

his next speech—on the state of political liberty in Crim Tartary, or the last improvements in Cotton Twist,—he had not determined which.

Beltravers and Sir Proteus paired off, as if in earnest converse on the adjourned question, whether the product of one multiplied by three is not in certain cases considerably less than before the process of multiplication.

The Lady Bab Brilliant,—who never could discover the use of walking, except as a means of reaching one's carriage,—bestowed herself on a chaise-longue near one of the superb western windows overlooking the Derwent; there to watch the beautiful lights of evening, as they melted into one another, and weave them into some pretty fancy for her next copy of Album verses.

The Lady Penthea, and the Boy-poet, (who had evidently taken a liking to each other,) wandered together into the outer Park, to explore some of those lovely nooks, down on the river's brink, where, hidden from all sights

and sounds but the lapsing water and the whispering leaves, the young enthusiast was wont to dream of that "to-morrow" which even his school days had taught him was destined to "come never."

The lesser lights of the party, not being likely to figure in our future pages, we leave to that privacy which can in no case be invaded without blame, except where it is voluntarily put off: an axiom, by-the-bye, which must be received, once for all, in explanation of what may by some readers be regarded as an undue omission from our pages, of the distinguished person to whom (virtually) they owe their birth. If the princely and accomplished host of Chatsworth finds no place in these records, it is because those general claims upon him as a host, which he always so scrupulously fulfils, prevented him from taking part in those particular discussions, and their results, with which alone these pages concern themselves.

XVIII.

PROJECTS AND PROMISES.

The persons of our Chatsworth party who took a particular interest in the question so unexpectedly raised by the oration of Mr. Tressyllian Toms, found themselves assembled earlier than usual on the following day,—no one being present, however, but those who seemed disposed to take a personal part in it; namely, the particular individuals who, in virtue of the prophetic spirit of our office, we have already placed before the reader, as especially concerned in these pages.

Mr. Tressyllian Toms was, as usual, the last to arrive and the first to begin talking. He had scarcely introduced his person within the door of the music-room, where they had agreed to assemble, than, with the said door in his hand, he began what was evidently the

preface to one of his interminable harangues. This sending his voice in advance of him, as it were, was one of his methods of securing the ear of the company, before anybody else could have time to obtain it, after the momentary pause which the entrance of every new comer occasions.

"That project of yours, Lady Bab,"—he began, in a half polite, half patronizing tone, "is really worth consideration, and I have been thinking——"

"So have I, Mr. Toms," interrupted Lady Bab, in that vivacious and rather decisive tone of voice which she always adopted when she had made up her mind to be heard; on which occasions even Mr. Toms himself, if he was not transformed into that (to him) anomalous character, a listener, at least ceased to insist on having all the talk to himself.—"So have I been thinking,—(you smile—but I do think, sometimes,—) and I always find thinking a process much too troublesome to perform without

fee or reward; so that, when I do think, it is always to some specific purpose: and with me,

The flighty purpose never is o'ertook
Unless the deed go with it:

and the deed shall go with it on the present occasion;—so listen and perpend. While Watson was arranging my hair this morning, I matured a plan which, if the present company will help me to carry it into execution, will some day or other immortalize all of us,—for a month at least; and what is better, will amuse us for a week in the mean time. This is my plan:—you, Mr. Toms, shall write a fifty-page article, (àpropos de bottes) in the Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews respectively, (I'm told you are the only person whose politics has secured you the grandes and petites entrées of both,) proving and decreeing that, thenceforth and for ever, a legitimate prose Tale can and shall take no more time in the reading than a five-act play; and that to construct such a Tale with perthe full as high an achievement as a perfect Tragedy. In the interim, the present company shall be preparing an (unconsciou exemplification of our friend's theory; and the enunciation of the problem, and its solution, shall be so timed, as to come upon the hithertobenighted public like a coup-de-main, and fairly surprise them into acquiescence. 'The bold thunder' shall, with its eloquent grumbling, arouse their astonished wits into attention; and the brilliant lightning shall follow on its heel, to flash conviction."

Mr. Reginald Beltravers, who had been listening with more attention than its playful tone seemed to claim, to the foregoing rattle of Lady Bab, here observed:—

"Nothing like genius for putting new ideas into one's head, (often without knowing or intending it,) and nothing like female wit for working up the raw material into an available form! Here have Plume and I been 'cud

gelling our brains' fruitlessly, ever since Toms's tirade of yesterday, to hit upon some expedient for preventing his eloquence from being lost upon the world—and lo! the whole matter is managed in the untwisting of a curlpaper!"

"But will Lady Bab take part in her own enterprise?" asked Sir Proteus doubtingly; "for we shall need to have the problem solved by at least half a dozen different processes, before we can hope to see it accepted as the settled critical authority on which Tales shall in future be constructed."

"Take part in it!" exclaimed Lady Bab.
"Why, so determined am I to see my project
carried into effect, that I mean to execute it
single-handed, if none of you grave signors
will aid and abet me."

"But I am afraid, after all," said Beltravers, "there is more than two words to this bargain. I have been thinking over the matter seriously since last night, and I am

satisfied that Toms is as right in some points as he is wrong in others. That a prose Tale of passion and character, if pitched in the right key, kept to the right length, and its materials duly adapted to the purposes in view, may be made as effective in its results as a high Tragedy, I verily believe. But then the materials themselves,—the passion, the character, and the incident,—must be precisely those suited for a high Tragedy. Nay,—I do not think that the desired results can be attained even in this latter case, unless, while parting with the dramatic effects which can only be gained by that form of composition, we avail ourselves to the utmost of those narrative effects which are peculiar to that Moreover,—to make up still further for the absence of that intensity of effect which can only be gained by the dramatic form, the use of dialogue must be resorted to, whenever the narrative will not be injuriously arrested by it; and to compensate for the loss of that elevation of tone and step which is obtained by the use of the tragic cothurnus, the utmost possible care and pains must be bestowed upon the style,—which must be made to produce *physical* results equivalent to those obtained by verse, without for a moment departing from the simple march of prose.—In short—"

"In short,"—interposed Lady Bab, gaily, "if people would but put as much talent, or genius, or both, into a prose Tale of a hundred pages long, as it would take to make a first-rate Tragedy, and employ as much time and trouble on them into the bargain, they might chance to produce as good a thing!—Like the critic in Rasselas, you would endow your possible tale-writer with an assemblage of attributes not extant together beneath the moon, and thus smother my project in its own virtues! But your arguments have determined me to try the simple attire of the olden time nevertheless: for if

I cannot make up for the homeliness of the fashion by the value of the materials, or the beauty of the form they cover, I will at least not any longer assist in the pantomime trick of passing off so many bundles of Monmouth Street finery, and second-hand French fripperie from the Dudevant fabrique, for so many bonafide ladies and gentlemen,—much less honest men and women."

"And will you, Toms," inquired Sir Proteus, "instead of telling us how tales should in future be written, show us? As to Beltravers, he must do so if others do, to preserve his charter, of doing everything better than everybody else. And I'll guarantee him that he may do it with perfect safety to the fee-simple of his estate in three-volume-noveldom: for (not to mention sundry reasons which his modesty might object to hear) the weeds in question, having once taken root in the garden of literature, are of too rank and rampant a growth to be wholly eradicated;

especially while the owners of the garden (who pay for its cultivation, and therefore have a right to be consulted) persist in mistaking the weeds for flowers."

"Rather say," observed Beltravers, "that the weeds are flowers, to those who think them so: the only essential difference between the two being that fragrance which asks an acquired sense to entertain it. I will," added he, "try to raise one of your highly-scented exotics for Lady Bab's flower-show, nevertheless; though I by no means pledge myself not to return to the cultivation of those daisies and buttercups which, I cannot help thinking, are not to be wholly despised, while they afford pleasure to the millions who have no means of access to the Horticultural Gardens of literature."

"Well," said Lady Bab, graciously,—"so you will do it, we care not for the why or wherefore; since it ensures success to our enterprise. And what says Mr. Toms?" added she. "He

will not, I hope, after talking us into the Quixotism of writing what, according to his account, nobody will publish, and if they would, nobody will read, leave us to find our way out of the scrape as we best can."

"Oh!" cried Beltravers, "Toms has left off writing since he took to talking. He does not like dividing his triumphs, even with himself. Though I don't very well see how we are to do without him: for it is clear that this projected crusade of ours against the heathenism of three volumes must, for the nonce, take the very form it aims to abolish, or nobody will have anything to say to it."

"Well, have with you then!" exclaimed Mr. Toms; "for I like fighting people with their own weapons. True it will, in this case, be very like trying to find the way to heaven by a pious fraud. But the alternative savours of 'the other place;' where 'good intentions' are said to go but very little way, except as 'pavement.'"

"So be it, then!" said Beltravers, decisively.

'Let us contribute, each after his kind, a Tale, of that particular length stipulated by Toms as the only one at which a Tale can with propriety unfold itself; let this new Decameron go forth to the world under a Chatsworth safe-conduct; and let the proceeds be applied to found a Chatsworth Scholarship at Cambridge, for the best Annual Essay to prove that a part may be greater than the whole."

XIX.

EXPLANATORY.

Within a week from the period at which our last chapter closes, the chief of our Chatsworth illuminati had each signified to the rest the completion of a Tale, constructed on the one principle (in regard to quantity) which had been admitted, more or less, by them all, as indispensable to the intellectual

and moral results sought to be obtained in the class of composition which had been discussed between them: each at the same time vehemently deprecating any idea that they claimed the merit of having hit the high mark, in other respects, at which each confessed to have aimed.

We shall spare the reader all participation in the superfluous modesty which was thrown away on this occasion. But it would not be doing the respective writers of these Romances that justice which they look for at our hands, as faithful chroniclers of their "sayings" no less than of their "doings," if we did not add a few words, as to what they themselves do, and what they do not, profess to have attempted and accomplished.

First, then, as to the generic term they have chosen to apply to the Tales. They are "Romances," in the strictest sense of that much-abused term;—meaning thereby, a narration which, without in any particular depart

ing from the natural, appeals to the Imagaintion, rather than to the Reason or the Belief; and which purposely adopts a tone of sentiment, and a depth and force of passion, as little springing from, and ministering to, the ordinary business of ordinary life, as does "the stuff that dreams are made of;" but which as surely "denotes a foregone conclusion" as do those dreams themselves. The most unimaginative of readers cannot mistake these Romances for true stories: nevertheless, their writers are willing to admit, that in proportion as they fail to impress the reader with a sense of their truth, in that precise proportion have they failed to attain the only legitimate end of such productions.

It should further be noted that, in order to place themselves on a fair level with each other in regard to subject, it was expressly agreed between them, to repudiate all "personal themes,"—except in Wordsworth's very unusual sense of that phrase. In other words,

they chose to forego all the adventitious advantages arising from the prestige of historical or classical associations on the one hand, and those more potent ones still which are born of the individual sympathy induced by personal associations on the other. In these Romances the reader will meet with none of the Antonies and Cleopatras of his school or college days; still less with any of the individual Thomsons or Johnsons of his personal acquaintance in the actual world; he will not even encounter a single "local habitation" that ever crossed him in reality or in books—scarcely a "name" that he ever associated with any actual human being.

If therefore the reader is not of a temper to sympathize with human beings, merely as such, he will find little to move or gratify him in these Romances.

Further;—the writers of these Tales desire it may be noted, that although the same reason which directed their choice of subjects, in some degree induced the uniform adoption of that bare simplicity of style in which their lucubrations are attired, they were chiefly directed to this choice by their determination that these Tales shall please, if at all, by virtue of their intrinsic qualities alone: for they hold that, in compositions of this nature, the charms of mere style may be made to hide all errors, and fill up all deficiencies—that, like the art of dress in women, which levels all ranks and distinctions of personal beauty, style may, (and for the most does in the present day,) go far either to veil or to supersede all other merits.

As it has been admitted on all hands, in the foregoing consultations, that the disease in question can only be combatted with a reasonable hope of success on the homœopathic principle, of "like cures like," it became a question of no little difficulty with our critical doctors, which among them, if either, should undertake the unthankful office of

putting the needful medicaments into the required form. Each was willing enough to furnish a portion of the simples which they believed to be alone capable of restoring the patient to a "safe and pristine health:" but which of them would condescend to the office of gilding the pills, or otherwise disguising the proffered medicaments into that palatable form in which alone the patient can at present be expected to take them?

How this difficulty has been got over, the reader may learn (if he can) at the Dispensary in Great Marlborough Street. In the mean time, it is to be expressly understood that the physicians themselves are in no degree answerable for the vehicle in which their medicines are now administered.

Finally, it must be explained that, in consenting that their Chatsworth lucubrations shall see "the light of common day," our illuminati have expressly stipulated against being publicly identified with their respecbarbarians and infidels who at present hold possession of the holy places of English prose fiction. Like the Knights Errant of old, they choose to fight with their visors down; and it is not for us to gainsay their good pleasure. Whether they may be induced to lift them in the event of victory, remains to be seen. In the by-no-means impossible alternative, of defeat, they will certainly remain to the end of time as profound a mystery as the Man in the Iron Mask.

This resolution considerably lightens the remainder of our task, by enabling us so to curtail of their somewhat "unfair proportions" the discussions which intervened between the reading of each Tale, as merely to indicate the substance of what each writer thought it necessary to premise, explanatory of the peculiar nature, subject, &c., of his or her respective contribution.

In pursuance of this duty we have to point

Tale require it to be especially borne in mind that, at the remote and semi-barbarous period to which the narrative refers, a Vow, solemnly and voluntarily pronounced, was held to be so absolutely binding on the person pronouncing it, that no considerations or consequences, human or divine, were deemed a sufficient bar to its fulfilment, provided the conditions were fulfilled on which it was founded.

Other portions of the Tale require that the reader should be reminded, that, although none of the great leading truths of physics, connected with the movements of the heavenly bodies, and their influences on the earth, and on one another, were absolutely known at the period in question, much less recorded in books, many of them had been, for century after century, floating about the world, the waifs and strays of (so called) science, to be seized upon, and again lost or abandoned, from time to time, for lack of those intellec-

tual qualities and appliances necessary to their establishment and transmission as recognised truths. It was not till many centuries afterwards, when the courage, the intellect, and the knowledge of a Galileo, met together in one and the same individual, that they were fairly demonstrated, and made part of the actual belief of mankind.

THE THREE VOWS.

•

.

THE THREE VOWS.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

On the northern coast of ancient Armorica, (since called Brittany,) there dwelt a lady, of noble birth, named Dorigen. She was the last of an illustrious house; and being endowed with extraordinary beauty, great wealth, every feminine virtue, and those endearing qualities of manner and of mind which are still more resistless than these in the eyes of the other sex, several of the greatest lords of the country had long been suitors for her hand.

VOL. I.

But they sued in vain: the Lady Dorigen treated all with respect who deserved it at her hands, but none with marked distinction: her whole time and thoughts, as well as the vast produce of her lands, seemed to be divided between those acts of charity and of courtesy which she felt that her station imposed on her as duties, though she performed them as if her own gratification was all that hung on their fulfilment.

Scarcely a week passed that the castle of the Lady Dorigen was not the scene of some stately and noble festivity, of which all were in turn invited to partake, whose condition made it consistent with the customs of the times that they should be received as the guests and companions of one who traced her lineage through the best blood of the land. Yet all who were so received were treated by the Lady Dorigen as if no distinctions of birth or station existed.

Among the most constant attendants at these

festivities was a young man, of knightly birth, named Arviragus. He was of noble person, and descended of English blood; but poor in estate, and withal so little gifted with a sense of his own claims to female favour, that he for some time scarcely dared to think of the Lady Dorigen in any other light than as a being on whom he was permitted to gaze in silent admiration, as on some divine incentive to thoughts of virtue and deeds of nobleness.

And this, and no other, was the Lady Dorigen to Arviragus, for a long period; until he had acquired a settled habit of so dressing his mind and moulding his actions by the opinions and sentiments of this lady, that he came at last to feel as if there were no other criterion of goodness or of honour.

The reverent respect which Arviragus had thus cultivated for the Lady Dorigen was so deep and engrossing, that it did not allow him at first to entertain the possibility, much less to encourage the growth, of any feelings of a

less deferential nature. And even if he had permitted himself to entertain the thought whether or not he did or could dare to love such a being, the repeated refusals the Lady Dorigen had given to the suits of several of the most honourable, approved, and wealthy nobles of the land, had so effectually put aside all hope of a return of his passion, that, being of a calm, steadfast, and self-possessed spirit, he was content to live quietly on, performing all the noble and generous actions that occasion permitted him, and attributing them all, in his own mind, to the divine influence which she exercised within him; but in no case performing them with a direct view to her approval or knowledge.

The exalted character which Arviragus was thus silently and almost unconsciously acquiring, for the most chivalrous valour, generosity, and self-devotion, was not lost upon Dorigen. As intellectual qualifications, and their moral results, were the only ones which reached her

feelings in her intercourse with those about her, so they were the only ones which exacted from her any external marks of particular distinction and regard. Accordingly, since the growing character of Arviragus for every knightly virtue had become fully known to her, she had never failed to receive him with marked kindness and respect.

One or two of the noble actions of Arviragus, which had come to the knowledge of Dorigen, were of a nature to call for their particular mention in his presence;—and this had given her occasion to speak of them before him; which she did with such a sweet frankness, and unchecked warmth of expression, that, though he was the last of all those who heard her words who could have attributed them to anything like a personal sentiment towards himself, yet he could not but feel that the almost awful distance and difference he had been accustomed to consider as existing between them, was thus in some degree les-

sened; and from that moment Arviragus began to look upon the Lady Dorigen, as at least of a kindred nature with himself: which, until then, his reverential admiration—bordering on something like adoration—had almost prevented him from doing.

The spell of her wondrous beauty, and the atmosphere of intellectual superiority which the youthful and enthusiastic imagination of Arviragus had cast around the object of his admiration, being thus broken through by the nearer and more familiar intercourse which now subsisted between them, he immediately perceived that he had long loved this lady with the entire devotion of his heart and mind; and he began to encourage thoughts, at least, if not hopes, of obtaining her favour. And as the ardent warmth of his nature was no less active, when aroused, than the power which he possessed of controlling and directing its course to wise and honourable ends, he soon determined on at least offering her

the homage of his love; though he felt that he could only bring himself to do this in the same spirit in which he would bow before the gods, and should look for and accept the event, whatever it might be, with the same trusting and reverent patience with which he would await their answers to his prayers.

In brief, Arviragus sued to the lady Dorigen, and laid his humble affection at her feet; and almost as much to his surprise as delight, he was at once accepted by her, with that noble and frank sincerity which became her character, but which all but himself were disposed to attribute to a long-cherished passion for him;—nothing else being sufficient to account, in the eyes of the world, for her repeated refusals of suitors who were so much nearer to herself in rank and station.

But the world was wrong in its conjectures,—as it ever is when they spring from envy and ill-nature. The Lady Dorigen did not love Arviragus, till she felt a perfect assurance that he loved her. But when she did feel this, the

knowledge at once added all that was wanting:
to complete the impression which his noble
character and person, and the devoted respect
he had always shown towards her, had produced; and what the natural delicacy of her
character would never have permitted, under
other circumstances, to have amounted to more
than an admiring and tender esteem, became
instantly, and to ordinary observers unaccountably, changed into a passionate affection.

A courtship (if such it could be called) like that which now subsisted between Dorigen and Arviragus, and the various changes of feeling and modifications of character which it produced on the parties engaged in it, are not matters that can be fitly described in words; nor does the progress of our Tale require them to be so described. Suffice it that in due time the marriage was celebrated with all becoming festivities; and Arviragus was duly installed as ord of the Lady Dorigen's great wealth, and the happy possessor of her heart and person.

It must here be noted, that, before the mar-

riage ceremony was performed, Arviragus had made a formal and solemn Vow, and sworn to it on the faith of his honour and his knighthood, that though, according to the customs of the world, his own station, and that of his beloved lady, required him to receive from her, on their union, the nominal surrender of her will, and the seeming controul over her actions and her state, yet no circumstances should ever induce him to assert these (so called) rights, acquired by his marriage with her; that he would never seek to bias her will, or controul her thoughts or actions, in the smallest particular; that, on the contrary, he would ever bear himself as her humble and devoted lover and servant, and never cease to acknowledge that immeasurable superiority, both of intellect and of virtue, which had first called forth his admiring duty towards. her: in short, that as he looked upon her as the immediate creator and inspirer of all the good that was in him, and of all that which alone had enabled him to find favour in her sight, he

would never cease to treat her as his superior in all things, and would ever subject his will and his judgment to the fiat of her's.

CHAPTER II.

THE married bliss of two such lovers as Arviragus and Dorigen may not be told; except that it was as perfect as the fulfilment of every wish, and the performance of every duty, could make it. And thus it continued for more than two years.

At about the end of that time, matters of import required the presence of Arviragus in England, and threatened to detain him there for a considerable period; and after due preparation, he departed, leaving his Dorigen, for the first hour since their happy union, alone.

There are lovers who fancy that no pains are so bitter as those of absence. There are others—and such an one was the Lady Dorigen—

who feel that absence is the next best state to that actual presence which precedes and follows it. For Dorigen, the person alone of her Arviragus was absent; his spirit and his love were ever present, and she could commune with them as intelligibly and distinctly as if her lips had formed her thoughts and feelings into words, and his lips were there to answer them.

Still it must not be supposed that Dorigen's state was not very different from what it had hitherto been, or from that which she had ever expected it to be. But if it was less enviable in most things, in some she even felt that her ord's absence was a blessing to her; and chiefly so, as it enabled her to cast, as it were, at a distance from her, their past bliss, and thus contemplate it as an object apart from herself, and even look upon it as if it were a visible thing.

That the current, and even the character, of Dorigen's feelings were at first entirely changed

by the departure of her lord, was evident by the change which showed itself in her air and But a grave face may cover as happy thoughts as a smiling one, and silence is often a more eloquent exponent of a satisfied heart than many words. Almost the only difference between Dorigen's bliss when her beloved husband was present with her, and that which she now enjoyed, was, that the one was active and nearly unconscious, and spread itself out over all that contributed to make up the daily beauty of her life; steeping it all in the perpetual light of cheerfulness;—while the other was almost wholly contemplative, and seemed to emanate from other things, instead of communicating itself to them. When her lord was with her, she had nothing to do but feel and enjoy the perfect bliss of her portion, and feel it doubled in his; and this filled her face with smiles, and made her heart grow garrulous, and overflow to her lips in gay talk. But now that he was away, she was perpetually thinking of him, and

letting her feelings yearn towards him in the unknown distance where he was dwelling; and the certain hope of his return became the almost sole point of her contemplation. Over this she brooded, in blissful silence, as the dove broods, day by day and night after night, over the embryo offspring that lie under her breast, and that she is no less secure of possessing at the appointed hour than if she already felt them move beneath her, and heard their first feeble cries.

But though the absence of her husband did not greatly diminish the happiness of Dorigen, it entirely changed the habits of her life for the time. She no longer made her castle the scene of gay festivities, and mixed but little with the world, except so far as her ever-active charities called upon her to do. These she performed with her own hand, as heretofore; but she passed the rest of her time in either wandering alone among the beautiful woods and gardens in the midst of which their habitation was situated, or in sitting at home, in her now favourite chamber overlooking the sea at that particular spot where her husband's bark had quitted the shore, and where she, at no very distant period, was to look for its return.

But there was one thing which, if it did not at first actually disturb, did at least interfere with, the otherwise contented and happy temper of mind which Dorigen preserved during the absence of her beloved lord. And though it amounted to little more than a fancy, and though Dorigen herself knew this, yet it did not affect her the less on that account, but perhaps even the more.

The coast on which their castle stood was a very dangerous one for large vessels to approach during a storm; and immediately in front of the castle were several rocks and breakers, always more or less in sight, on which many vessels had been wrecked.

Now, though Dorigen knew perfectly well that the little voyage which her husband would have to perform, from the coast of Albion, might and would be so arranged, (as to the season of the year, the nature of the vessel, and the like,) as to avoid almost the possibility of any danger that might be connected with the objects before her, yet the perpetual presence of those objects, and the knowledge that they had been fatal, came very soon to act upon her imagination, in a way that surprised and almost vexed, while it seriously troubled her:

The Lady Dorigen was anything but weak, and what the stronger sex are pleased to call "womanish," in her fears, on any subject, much less on one where everything called upon her to exercise the fine good-sense which was one of the chief ornaments of her character. And yet she could by no means prevent herself from every now and then exclaiming, as she sat alone at her favourite window overlooking the sea towards the English coast,—

"Oh! those rocks!—those everlasting rocks! would they were away! Not that I have any fears!" she would continue, in a voice which was not without some slight indications belying the words it uttered.

"Fears!" she would repeat, after a pause, and with an expression which seemed to say,—
"as if anything could happen, to part my lord and me!"

And she smiled away the thought, almost contemptuously, as if it were a sort of folly or impiety to have permitted it even to pass across her mind.

"But still those rocks," she would go on musing to herself,—"they are there always,—always there,—in sunshine or in cloud, in calm or in storm, day nor night, they never disappear! If the tide did but cover and hide them once a day, I should not so much heed them; for I could then choose that time for looking across the waters, to where he is. But now, I cannot turn my face towards him, but I must look on them, threatening him away, as it were, with their stony faces;—for

there is no denying that they do threaten, though they cannot hurt him. How they deform the beautiful, smooth surface of the sea! just rising up above it, as if merely to break its bright uniformity. I wonder I never used to observe that before. Would to heaven they were away! I even dream about them sometimes!—But how foolish is this!" she would add, after a pause: and when she reached this point, she would rise hastily, and breathe away those shadows of her fears, and presently lose the memory of them in other scenes.

But still those fancies would return upon her every day, when she saw the objects which had first called them up: till at last, finding that they were seldom absent long from her thoughts, and were becoming a real trouble to her, she wisely determined on at once getting rid of them, though at the price of her favourite walk upon the terrace looking on the sea, and her favourite apartment above it.

CHAPTER III.

ARVIRAGUS had now been absent several weeks; and the neighbouring nobles of the country, finding that Dorigen led so recluse a life, and fancying, from the almost pensive gravity of her mien and manner, that she was much less happy during her husband's absence than she really was, sought by various means to amuse her thoughts: for she was universally esteemed and beloved among them, and the respectful admiration with which everybody regarded her, had increased rather than diminished since her so happy union with Arviragus. To this end they seemed to vie with each other in preparing fêtes and festivities of various kinds, to which Dorigen was always invited, and at which she had, latterly, seldom refused to be present.

One of th emost constant guests at these

festivities was a young noble named Aurelius. He had, in early youth, been an intimate friend and associate of Arviragus, who greatly esteemed his frank and noble nature; but their intimacy had been early broken off, by the departure of Aurelius for foreign travel.

Aurelius was now possessed of a good estate, a fine person, graceful manners, great and varied accomplishments, and a generous and honourable disposition; and all these had united together in rendering him, since his arrival at man's estate, one of the most happy and happy-making of human beings.

It was shortly after the departure of Arviragus for England, that Aurelius returned to his estate in Armorica, after a lengthened sojourn in foreign lands. Till then he had never seen the Lady Dorigen; but he no sooner looked upon her than he conceived a passion for her which nothing could controul—not even the certainty he very soon felt, of her absolute devotion to her husband.

CHATSWORTH:

· Still that devotion, added to the perfect respect which soon became blended with Aurelius's passion for Dorigen, prevented him for a long while from even thinking of making known his feelings; a forbearance which, it must be confessed, nothing else—not even his boyish friendship for her husband Arviragus—could have preserved in him, but the evident and entire pre-occupation of the lady's heart and mind: for with all his honourable and generous feelings in regard to either sex, Aurelius was young, he had Gallic blood in his veins, and he was deeply in love. To abstain therefore from at least essaying his fortunes, would, under other circumstances, not have come within the scope of his gay philosophy.

In the present case, however, he saw at once that the matter was absolutely hopeless; and he confessed to himself that it ought to be so. But the confession went to his very heart as he made it; and it seemed to settle there, as if for ever, into a sentiment of bitter and

almost insupportable disappointment, when he reflected that, but for certain idle delays of a few days or weeks, at this or that city, on his return home from travel, it might have been otherwise: for he soon learned the history of Arvirague's brief courtship, and was not enough skilled in the subtleties of love to suppose (what not even Dorigen herself was aware of) that her affection for her lord had sprung into being at least, if not into life, at the very first instant her eyes met his; and that it had been secretly gathering strength, day by day, up to the very hour in which his declaration of a similar passion for her had enabled it at once to know and to assert itself in her heart

Aurelius therefore gave up all hope of obtaining the love of the Lady Dorigen: even the long absence of her husband did not tempt him to take any steps towards it, or to even hint at the existence of his passion for her.

But Aurelius did not the less seek the

society of the Lady Dorigen; and as his manner towards her was always marked by the most respectful devotion, and was in all other particulars acceptable and agreeable to her, she sought rather than shunned him, on those occasions when they met at the castles of the neighbouring nobles.

The innocent frankness of Dorigen's behaviour during her intercourse with Aurelius in the absence of her husband, was so entirely free from all tinge of coquetry, that while it afforded him those opportunities of seeing and conversing with her which were now the sole solace of his life, it took away from him even the shadow of a hope that his love could ever be returned, and at last threw his ardent and active mind into a condition which made it prey upon his body, till that in return re-acted upon his spirits, and he gradually became an utterly altered being,—as if some strange mental disease had taken possession of him.

But though everybody observed and la-

mented, and most of all Dorigen, the change which had lately taken place in the spirits and appearance of Aurelius, yet no one—and least of all the lady herself—for a moment divined, or even suspected, the cause. It is true that Aurelius, when he and Dorigen happened to be at a little distance from the rest of the guests in whose company they met, would sometimes gaze silently upon her face, with an appealing and piteous expression, till the tears came into his eyes, and rolled unnoticed by himself down his (now) thin, pale cheeks. And then he would suddenly start, and turn himself away, and seem to summon back his wandering thoughts, and address her on some indifferent topic,—as if absence of mind had caused a momentary forgetfulness of where and what he was.

It was on one of these occasions, on a sweet evening in the early summer time, when Aurelius had been attending Dorigen in one of those walks which she was so fond of taking, through the retired parts of the gardens of a neighbouring castle, that he thus found himself gazing at her for some time silently, and thus started, and then seemed to collect himself, when he observed that she was taking particular notice of his appearance.

In fact Dorigen had long remarked a something in the look and manner of Aurelius, which, though it was quite inexplicable to her, gave her real uneasiness; for she had latterly, and particularly since the evident failing of his health and spirits, come to feel a friendly interest in Aurelius, which the charm of his merely external qualities, and even his many graceful accomplishments, had not been able before to excite in her. The truth is, that, while she saw him well and happy, it had seemed to her that he was sufficient to himself. But now that he evidently needed sympathy, she did not wait to know if he sought it from her, but was as anxious to offer it to him, and to know the cause of his malady, (if there was one,) as she

had formerly been indifferent to him, in any other light than as an agreeable companion. And when, on the occasion just alluded to, she perceived the strong emotion which agitated his countenance as he looked upon her, and the sudden attempt to suppress it when he found that it was observed, she at once addressed him, with a show of sincere interest in her manner, and a touching gentleness in her voice, which, while they charmed his feelings into a momentary calm, as if some magical talisman had been waved over him, did but act the part of an insidious opiate, administered to a patient whose very disease has been brought on by indulging in such dangerous remedies: they soothed his feelings into an artificial stillness for a moment, only to disturb and trouble them tenfold for the time to come.

"Aurelius," she said, "I have long observed that something troubles you; something too of serious import it must be, for its effects are more and more evident every time I see you."

She waited to hear if he made any reply, or showed any reluctance to the matter, whatever it was, being thus plainly referred to. But as he remained silent, she continued to speak; though she did not fail to observe the sudden, and, to her, the inexplicable change, that passed over his face, the moment he perceived the subject on which she was addressing him.

"I am sure I need not tell you, Aurelius," she continued, "that no idle curiosity prompts me to inquire into the nature of your griefs—if you have them. But I have been much indebted to your friendly and delicate attentions to me, during my husband's absence. And besides, that absence has taught me what trouble is—which I scarcely knew before, but by name; and the knowledge has made me more quick to see the troubles of others, and more anxious to help to do them away."

Aurelius was still silent, though his face grew paler, and his lips trembled slightly as she spoke. Perhaps she did not look at him intently enough to observe this; or if she did, it did not prevent her from proceeding, as he showed no sign of wishing to avoid the conference that she had thus frankly began.

"Aurelius"—so she went on—"you have no sister or mother to tell your sorrows to, if any are upon you; and I do not observe that you cultivate any close friendship or intimacy among your own sex. And yet, we are not well alone, even in our joys. I scarcely felt this once;—but then I made friends of my youthful spirits; and my happy fortunes enabled me to create sympathies towards me, wherever I went, and to indulge my own in their most romantic wants. And this stood me in stead of that communion of thought and of feeling which, since I have enjoyed it, I could not live for long without.—I am afraid," she continued after a pause, "that you will think I am making a very long speech to you, and without any very intelligible end. But what I was going to say was—that—that—,"

Here she hesitated a little, as if to choose the words in which she should express herself: for though it did not for an instant occur to her that any wrong interpretation could be put on what she felt to be the mere result of an involuntary kindness of heart, yet that sense of propriety and delicacy which is an instinct in the female mind, whispered her to beware. Attending to the warning, without being conscious of it, she went on.

"I was going to say that I am sure, if my husband were here, he would think that you need at least the offer of a friendly hand and tongue, to help you to bear, or get rid of, the unhappiness that (you do not deny) presses so heavily upon you. And thinking this, he would, I am sure, make you that offer as frankly as he would wish you to refuse it if it would be of no avail. As he is not here, let me make it for him. Is there anything we can do to do you good?—I say we," she added, smiling—"for he and I are one, you know, and in his absence I am lord and lady too."

They had continued walking, side by side, as Dorigen spoke; otherwise she could not have failed to observe the intense emotion that agitated the countenance of Aurelius, and shook his frame, as he listened to her words. But when she ceased speaking, and waited for his reply, she stood still, and turning towards him, looked in his face.

It was pale as marble; and though no tears were upon it, it was wet all over with the strong internal efforts he had been making, to restrain his feelings till she should cease to speak.

When she did so, he let his face drop for a moment into his hands; then lifted up his head suddenly, as if a desperate resolution had come to him;—and looking upon her with an expression that affected, while it almost terrified her, he exclaimed, in loud and broken accents, and pausing between every few words—"Lady, you can do me good! you can, and no one else!—I must speak or die! I have tried to be silent, and I have been so, almost at the price of my

life. But it will not be, any longer. Those words and looks and tones of yours have burst open anew the flood-gates of my heart, and I feel that it is drowning—now—even now into the depths of its unmitigable love! Love, lady!—love!—that it is that troubles, that consumes me."

He paused, and Dorigen looked at him with increasing pity and emotion,—but she did not in the smallest degree perceive the import of his words.

"It is love!" he cried out suddenly, and with renewed vehemence. Then he added, in a broken and subdued voice—"Help me, or I die;"—and he stretched his arms towards her beseechingly, and melted away into a childish passion of tears, and fell on his knees at her feet.

Still she did not understand him; for in the deep simplicity of her heart she had never for an instant contemplated the possibility of herself being the object of a guilty passion. So she

endeavoured to raise Aurelius from the ground; and she almost smiled as she said to him,—

"Love?—nay, is that your grief?"

For it had never once occurred to her that love could bring with it anything but bliss. Then, as she looked at him, and saw the fatal marks of misery that were upon him, she continued, in a different tone—

"But you said that I could help you. What need, then, was there of all this (I must now think) overstrained sorrow?"

Deep as the conviction of Aurelius had been that there was no shade of coquetry in the freedom of intercourse which Dorigen had lately permitted him, and almost seemed to encourage, he was utterly at a loss in what sense to take these last words, and the manner and look with which they were spoken. She could not, he thought, have mistaken the meaning of his words,—for, in the desperation of his feelings, he had even intended to be as explicit as a free confession of the cause of his

griefs could make him:—or rather he felt that, whether he intended it or not, he had been so, and that it was now too late for concealment. And as to her openly contemning and scorning an avowal which her own words had wrung from him after so long and fatal a silence,—that, he could still less suspect her of doing.

These thoughts, as they passed through his mind, and perplexed it between vain conclusions, stayed the sense of his sorrows for a brief space, bitter as they were. But as he looked at her, they presently returned with renewed force, and he again abandoned himself to them, as if nothing that she had said since his desperate avowal of their cause had been heard or understood by him. Still kneeling at her feet, and holding the hand that she had extended to raise him, he went on with the passionate and half-involuntary confession of his love.

"Love, lady,—love is the disease that destroys me! I would fain have concealed it, till ts consuming fires had worked their own cure.

But my heart is bursting with them, even now—now, as you look upon me! Oh,—those soft looks! Turn them away! I cannot live before them—they pierce, and pierce——"

He writhed for a moment, as if beneath bodily agony,—and then, looking up to her face again, and pressing her hand convulsively between his, he exclaimed,—

"Pity me-help me!-love me-or I die!"

Dorigen too well understood Aurelius now; and, as he uttered these last words, she instinctively withdrew her hand from his grasp, and shrunk backward from him; and a rush of various feelings agitated her heart, and for a moment deprived her of speech. Astonishment, fear, anger, womanly pride, disappointed confidence, all contended together which should first express themselves; and all threw their dim shadows upon her face. But the next moment they all passed away of themselves—the realities and their images together—as the clouds pass across the sky, and their shadows

VOL. I.

from the face of some clear lake that lies beneath;—leaving it clear and open as a bright unsullied mirror.

"Aurelius," said she, with an air of dignity blended with her softness, which he had never before seen her assume, and which, indeed, she never before had assumed to him, or to any one,—"Aurelius, need I beseech you to leave me? The words you have uttered would pain me—must I say how very deeply?—if it were only that they must put an end to the many pleasant hours we might have passed together;—but they pain me still more, when I think that you could bring yourself to utter them to me."

"Oh! pardon them, Lady!" he exclaimed, interrupting her.—"It was my great love that spoke—being greater than my will, that could not keep it silent."

She continued, in the same calm tone, and scarcely seeming to hear him.—"Not that I complain of them. They grieve and pain, but—

I will dare to say it—they do not offend me,—because I see that it was my own words which gave occasion to them. But they grieve me still more for this, in teaching me that we cannot even seek to help, without the danger of hurting one another. They teach me too"——

Here she suddenly stopped, as if recollecting that she was herself prolonging a conference which ought never to have taken place.

After a brief pause,—during which Aurelius continued to stand before her, silent, and looking upon the ground, as if utterly absorbed in his sorrows,—Dorigen merely added, "Farewell, Aurelius;" and she was turning away to depart.

But though Aurelius had scarcely heard her words, the import of these last seemed to reach him without the aid of his senses, and the thought of her leaving him thus, and for ever, (as he felt that their parting must now be,) made him once more lose all controul over his sorrows, and he exclaimed vehemently, yet with

a mixture of despairing weakness that seemed to shake his heart to pieces,—

"Stay, Lady! I conjure you, stay!—Is there no hope for me? Do not,—nay, dare not to leave me utterly without hope. I would fain not die while I can look upon you—upon that beauty for which alone I have lived since I beheld it. But without hope, the sight of it kills me."

Seeing that she was again turning from him to depart, he exclaimed, with a solemn earnestness which gave something awful to the sounds of his lorn voice,—

"Lady! I charge you do not leave me thus!— Look upon me, and speak to me,—or I will die here—now—at your feet."

And he felt for his sword, and was drawing it—still gazing fixedly upon her. But as she turned, and looked upon him again, piteously yet reproachfully, he dropped his hands, and stood silent and rebuked; and she once more addressed him, with more of sorrow than re-

sentment in her voice, but yet with a distant and dignified regret in her bearing, which sank into his heart, and seemed at once to sooth and to consume it.

"Aurelius, I need not tell you how I love my husband. All the world know it—for it is no less my pride than my delight. I must not say, neither, (for it might seem like boasting,) how he loves me, and how his happiness is bound up in that love. But let me say, that it was his commendations first made me see and know those generous qualities for which I so esteemed—nay,—let me not fear to say it—for which I still esteem you. He will shortly return; and shall he find you other than you were? And changed through—."

Here she stopped for a moment; and then, assuming a more cheerful tone, as if new thoughts had come to her, she continued,—

"Come, come!—we are both of us making more of this than it needs. You have been ill of late; and a sick body fills the head, and the heart, too, with fancies not their own. Come," she continued, smiling upon him with a sweet frankness, and holding out her hand,—"Come, let us return to our friends. Be but yourself, and by the time my Arviragus returns, you will have thrown away this foolish heart-sickness, that would otherwise mar the brightness of the festivities with which we must greet him."

It should seem that Aurelius had been listening to Dorigen's voice merely, not to her words; for when she ceased to speak, he only started slightly, as if at the sudden absence of something which had been taken from him, and then he cried faintly,—

"Oh, again! again!—cease not! I know it is the syren's charm, whose sweetness is so fatal. But I can neither live nor die without it."

"Nay, then," said Dorigen,—and there was now something of severity mixed with the tone of sorrow in which she spoke,—"Nay, then, it is not as I thought. Aurelius, when my lord Arviragus returns, we may meet again. Till then, farewell."

And she turned away, and was hidden from his sight by some projecting foliage round which she passed, before he seemed to feel the meaning of her words.

But the instant he lost sight of her form, his reason seemed at once to resume, in a great measure, that controul which had kept him silent so long. The expressions of passion which had agitated and almost distorted his countenance passed away; and he followed Dorigen, and again addressed her, in a calm and self-possessed tone of voice, but with a mournful murmur in it, which told too plainly of the storm by which it had lately been agitated.

"Lady," said he, "I adjure you once more to hear me—once, and it may be for the last time. What I have said is said, and cannot be recalled. And being said, I know that I must quit you. But the words you have uttered, make me feel that I would fain still live, if it be but to think of them, and of the voice that breathed them forth. They seem to bind me,

with soft chains of music, to a life that were, else, worse than death. But without hope, I cannot live if I would. Without hope, my soul forsakes me. Without hope, the very reason which now enables me to address you calmly, bids me die. Give me hope, then, though it be but in empty sounds, that may soothe my miseries while they mock them. Tell me to do impossible things; and say that when I have done them you will love me.—Nay look not so—I must speak the words, if I die in uttering them,—and what are they to you but words?—Bid me do things that have as yet been done only in thought; and say that, when done, you will love me, and will be to me, even as you are to your wedded lord: say this—only say it—and I will live upon the bare imagination, and trouble your sweet peace no more, till the impossible condition, whatever it be, is accomplished! Refuse this, and I swear, by the great gods who hear me, and by the godlike reason that now controuls and prompts me in what I say, that I will die before your facenow-here-without more words!"

"Reason!" exclaimed Dorigen, as if purposely overlooking the desperate resolution which now seemed to possess him. "Reasor! why this is madness, Aurelius—worse madness than that passion of which it has taken the place. And is it generous in you thus to try my womanish kindness? Come—no more of this! Let us part at once, and as friends."

"Say it, then," continued he; "say that I may hope, though that hope spring from despair itself. Say it, and I will live upon the bare sound! Bid me do something that never yet was done—I will not say something impossible;—for the very imagination of the promised reward will make me feel that nothing is impossible with that reward in view."

He kindled into new ardour at every word he spoke; the colour came into his pale and faded cheek, and burned there like a fire; and his eyes brightened and looked away into the

distance; and he seemed, for a few moments, entranced in a waking ecstasy of new and unthought-of bliss

At last, the kind and compassionate heart of Dorigen caught at this fanciful means of helping, and perchance curing, a mental malady which, it was clear to her, must prove a fatal one under unkind or injudicious treatment; and she at once determined to humanir this new imagination, which had now evidently taken possession of Aurelius. So, after thinking for a few moments, she again addressed him, in a smiling tone, but with an expression from which everything like levity was excluded;—for she saw that the least appearance of trifling with his sorrows would defeat her newly-acquired hope of curing them.

"Well," said she, "I will give you something to do for me; and when you have done it, you shall yourself name the guerdon of your toil. You know those Rocks, that so deform the fair face of the waters in front of our castle. Not a day passes but they trouble me. I cannot cast a look or thought from out my favourite chamber, towards the coast of Albion, where my beloved lord Arviragus sojourns, but they arrest my sight, and will not let it go, till they have filled my foolish fancy with fears, that vex me the more because I know them to be vain ones. Find some expedient, Aurelius, to take those frightful rocks from out my sight, but for one hour, and let me look abroad on the beautiful sea, a smooth unbroken mirror; and I will."—

She hesitated a moment, not at what she was about to say, but at the words she should say it in. But the next moment she thought to herself—nay, let me not spoil a kind deed by being over-nice about a word or two. And she went on,—"and I will love you, even as I LOVE MY BELOVED LORD, ARVIRAGUS."

"Swear it!" exclaimed Aurelius, instantly catching at her words,—"Swear it!"

His eager voice and vehement gesture almost

terrified her for a moment; and she replied to his exclamation only by a slight motion of her head and hand, indicating that he should not ask more of her.

"Nay, lady," he continued, "I will not think you are mocking me. And if not, do not, for a word more or less, mar the boon you are bestowing on me." Then, he added, in a solemn voice,—"Vow, by the eternal gods who hear us, that if I do the thing you have said, you will love me, and be to me even as you are to your lord and husband. Swear it!"

"Well—I MAKE THE vow," said she,—and she smiled as she said it, partly to dispel an involuntary feeling of something like superstitious fear, that came over her as she uttered the strange oath, and partly from an equally involuntary sense of the unmeaning importance that Aurelius seemed to attach to a few empty words.

"I am satisfied," said he with solemnity,

immediately she had uttered the last words.—"Now, lady, farewell! Till we meet again (if we should meet) think of me with pity and forbearance. Once more, farewell!"

And he sank upon his knee, and touching her hand, he bowed over it with an air and look of devotional respect; and then instantly departed.

PART IL

CHAPTER IV.

The course of our Tale must now carry us rapidly over an interval of about two years. During the whole of this period, the heart of Aurelius was kept alive within him, and his spirits active and afloat, by the strange hope that his desperate thoughts had created for him, out of the last words of Dorigen: for a hope he perpetually felt it to be, however fallacious or however remote.

On quitting her after the conference which has just been related, his soul-sickness seemed to pass away from him as if by magic, and with it the baneful influence it had so long been exercising over his physical powers; and he seemed suddenly to feel a new life infused throughout his frame, both mental and bodily. The weight of secret passion which had pressed

away, by the disclosure which he had made of it, and at the same time he missed the almost deadly fear which he had hitherto entertained, of incurring Dorigen's hatred and contempt, whenever such a disclosure should happen.

But above all, the task which he had now set himself to perform, however impossible it might seem to his sober reason, was not so to his excited and romantic fancy; especially when he recollected the seemingly miraculous stories that were abroad, of the wonders performed by the Alchymists and Astrologers in different parts of the world, and of the unlimited powers which, it was said, mind might, under certain circumstances, acquire over matter.

In fine, Aurelius saw opened before him a prospect unto the future, the absence of which, and of the desire or the power to look into it, form one of the most fatal ills to which our human nature is subject. Thoughts and

passion of his soul, and the person of her who had excited it, now came thronging upon him; and they seemed to urge his mind into that active occupation, in the presence of which no very absorbing sentiment of evil can for long together keep possession of the human intellect.

Immediately on quitting the Lady Dorigen, Aurelius determined to prepare for his departure from Armorica. Whither he should bend his course in the first instance, seemed a matter almost of indifference to him. But as his reason had now enlisted itself with his passions, in the prosecution of the object which had taken entire possession of his soul, he clearly saw that he must steadily adapt his means to his end, if he would retain even the hope of accomplishing it. He therefore determined to seek out the reputed learned of the age, whereever they were to be found, and ascertain what assistance and encouragement he was likely to

meet with among them. Accordingly, he directed his steps to Paris, in the first instance; where he stayed for several months. From thence he travelled through Italy, visiting the principal seats of learning; and then returned, and passed into Germany.

It would be departing from the object of our Tale, to follow Aurelius in his strange search, or trace the progress of those various degrees of probable success or failure which seemed to him from time to time to attend it. It is sufficient for our purpose to state, that the various persons with whom he consulted, the experiments he witnessed, and the studies he entered into, had at least the effect of keeping alive within him the one hope by which alone he wished to hold his life in fee.

True, that hope seemed, ever and anon or the point of expiring. But it was as often raised to a pitch of the most confident assurance, that his object at least might be accomplished—

that it was not a physical impossibility. And these perpetual alternations, by keeping all his faculties on the stretch, prevented that total and indolent absorption of them all in the direct contemplation of one object, which was most to be dreaded for him, and which had in fact constituted the disease of which he was seeking the cure.

It should not be concealed, either, that the inquiries which Aurelius had lately been induced to make for himself, as well as the conferences he had obtained with many of the really wise and learned of the age, had opened to his view glimpses into the secrets of Nature, and the wondrous powers by which she works, in effecting even the most trifling operations of her will, which could not fail to create a lively interest within him, apart from that which grew out of a reference to the one great object of his soul.

All this together, was sufficient to keep

Aurelius unremitting in his pursuit, and to preserve his bodily, as well as his mental faculties, in a condition fitted to its prosecution.

CHAPTER V.

MEANWHILE, affairs in Armorica resumed in a great measure their old course: for (in spite of the frightful Rocks) Arviragus returned safely, a few weeks after the departure of Aurelius, and found his Dorigen even sweeter in the slightly pensive cast that her beauty, both of mind and person, had acquired during his absence, than she was when he first wooed and won her. And they resumed their gay and festive courtesies; and all went on as before.

But still Dorigen was not the joyous creature that she had been, before the sad disclosure, made by Aurelius, of his guilty passion, and the strange result of that disclosure. At the first fit opportunity, she had related to Arviragus her singular conference with Aurelius, and much of that which had preceded and led to it. But she had not informed him of its strange and wild conclusion: why, she scarcely knew. Certain it is, that, wild and fanciful as the request had been which drew the Vow from her, and utterly unmeaning and idle as she felt that Vow itself to be,—still there was no concealing from herself that it was a Vow; and that therefore, however made, or with whatever view, it was a solemn and a sacred thing—a thing which, she now felt, should not have been trifled with, however kind and generous the motive for so doing might have been.

Certain it is, too, that the Lady Dorigen never looked upon the Rocks on the sea-shore before her Castle, without feeling that a very singular change had taken place in their effects upon her: for they still affected her when she saw them, and their images still haunted her, almost as fearfully as they had done during the absence of her lord. Now, however, it was the

thought of their possible absence that moved her; and she could not even imagine the view of a flat, unbroken surface of waters, from her once favourite window, without an indistinct feeling of something like inward dread coming over her.

All this, however, must be considered as relating (in its full strength at least) chiefly to the first few months after her husband's return: for the continued absence of any tidings of Aurelius gradually lessened the power of these impressions, and at last wore them down to a sort of pensive regret for his sorrows and their cause,—coupled with a distinct and everconscious feeling of tender sympathy with her kind, when she reflected on the mysterious links that bind our human hearts to one another, and on the mingled folly and inhumanity of attempting to live in and for ourselves alone.

These feelings, if they made Dorigen a little less joyous than she was wont to be before she

had learned to recognise and dwell upon them, did not a whit diminish that inward sense of happiness which alone reaches to the depths of the heart.

CHAPTER VI.

Ir was nearly two years after the departure of Aurelius from Armorica, that he was one day walking alone, beneath the still and gloomy cloisters of the stately Palace of the Prince Bishops, in the ancient city of St. Hubert, in the Low Countries, when a young man, of a grave and steadfast aspect, yet gentle and graceful in his mien and bearing, and attired in the simple costume of a German Student, came up to him, and addressed him thus:—

"Will the Lord Aurelius permit a stranger to ask the purport of his solitary musings? Trust me, it is no idle or impertinent curiosity that prompts the enquiry. Or shall I divine them?"—continued he, after waiting a few moments without receiving a reply. "They are, at least, not bound in by the limits of these venerable walls, nor even by the piles of antique learning and wisdom which are contained therein. If I mistake not, they are wandering among the untrodden Rocks that lift their heads above the else unbroken surface of the waters that wash the shores of distant Armorica."

At first, the words of the student scarcely broke the deep reverie in which Aurelius was absorbed. But this last portion of them roused him in an instant, and fixed his attention on the person who uttered them.

"I will not," continued the stranger, seeing that Aurelius did but gaze upon him with an air of silent surprise—"I will not, Sir, affect an ignorance which would be inconsistent with my purpose in thus addressing you. I have learned the object of your visit here; I know the utter want of success that has attended your pursuit

of that object elsewhere; I know that that object is, and ever will continue until its accomplishment, the sole and settled purpose of your life; and, briefly, I would fain, on certain conditions, aid you in its attainment."

There had been a time when words like these would have swelled the heart of Aurelius with a throng of eager hopes, or rather with one all-absorbing hope, which would have displaced for awhile every other feeling. But he had so often been led to indulge in dreams of this kind, which had been bred in him by the false promises of fraud, or folly, or enthusiasm, that he now listened but as one who may always be excited to a certain degree of attention, by naming the one theme which alone fills and occupies his thoughts.

"Who is it," said he calmly, but without anything like either indifference or distrust, "to whom I am indebted for taking a sufficient interest in my fate to enable him to penetrate

into my thoughts? for I will confess that you have divined the subject on which they were employed."

"I am an unknown Student," replied the stranger, "and would fain continue so, till I can achieve (if ever) what may at once deserve and gain me a name and fame."

"And what would you with me?" asked Aurelius.

"I repeat," replied the Student, "I would help you in your hitherto fruitless search after some means of performing the task set you by the lady of your love."

"And with what motive?" enquired Aurelius; "and how am I to believe that you, a nameless stranger, and so young too, should be able to help me in a task to which my own thoughts have been directed night and day for two long years in vain, and for which help I have sought and consulted (equally in vain) half the wise and learned of Europe?—a task," said Aurelius, mournfully, relapsing

once more into the reverie in which the Student had found him, "on which Nature herself seems to have set the seal of hopelessness."

"For my motive," replied the Student, "it must not be enquired into. Suffice it, on that head, that I ask nothing of you till the deed shall be accomplished. And for my means, they too must remain in my own keeping, at least till the event shall have proved their worth, or worthlessness. I think," continued he, "the task you seek to perform is, to make disappear from the surface of the sea all those Rocks which at present rise above it, within sight of a certain castle looking from the coast of Armorica to that of Albion."

"It is so, indeed," said Aurelius, with an air of sorrowful abstraction, which seemed to show that the words of the Student were producing little other effect on him than that of bringing the more vividly before his

mind's eye those images which were never wholly absent from it.

"And if," continued the Student, "you do this but for one day, nay—for one hour your wishes will be accomplished?"

"Yes!" said Aurelius fervently, but still with the same abstracted air, and without directing his attention to the stranger; as if he was merely answering questions propounded by his own thoughts.

"One question more," continued the Student,

"and I have done. Is there any limitation
to your task, in respect of time? Will any
day or hour serve for its performance?"

"Yes, any," replied Aurelius; and he almost smiled as he said it, and shook his head mournfully, as if he was thinking within himself how fallacious the hope was that was keeping him alive, and yet how utterly impossible it was for him to cast it off.

"Then," said the Student, without seeming to observe anything particular in the manner of Aurelius, "if it should please you to meet me, towards the fall of evening, beneath the grove of pines that skirts the city westward, I may come prepared to tell you the day and hour at which I will, on certain conditions, enable you to see performed the task enjoined you."

And he immediately left Aurelius, without waiting a reply.

These last words of the unknown Student produced a very different effect on their hearer from those which had preceded them. He had hitherto listened to the youthful stranger merely as to one who spoke on the one theme to which all his thoughts tended, and whose words, therefore, whatever they might be, did not fall upon his ear either like empty sounds, or like troublesome impertinencies,—as all others did. But there was something so decided in the last few words of the Student, and in the quiet and unpretending, yet confident tone in which they were uttered, that they

at once took possession of his mind; and every moment, as he continued to reflect on them, they seemed to acquire added power over him: till at last, long before the time named by the the Student for their meeting, the vivid imagination of Aurelius had created for itself a new fabric of hope, that seemed to hide all the obstacles which stood in the way of his desires. Now, too, that the stranger was absent, Aure-/ lius seemed to recollect that there was something in his look and manner which could not be coupled with deceit. And then, above all, he had promised positively to name the day and hour on which the great work might be accomplished: which was what no one had · hitherto pretended to do.

This prospect, of having the very time fixed, as a specific, and, as it were, a visible point on which his hopes might rest and dwell, affected him more powerfully, and seemed to come more home to his feelings, than anything else; and he repaired to the appointed place of

meeting, filled with eager and anxious thoughts, which seemed to stir his mind into a healthful activity, which it had not for a long time experienced.

The anxious balancing of his newly-awakened hopes, against the host of desponding fears which had lately been gaining upon the heart of Aurelius; the restless and feverish agitation of spirits which this vain balancing of one set of uncertainties against another at last caused within him, as he paced impatiently beneath the solemn pine grove, waiting the Student's coming, and hearing, without marking it, the melancholy dirge that the dark old trees above his head seemed to sigh forth to the chill breeze that was passing through them; the blank misgiving that almost made him start, as the thought came over him that his griefs had perhaps been made the theme of some idle jest; the momentary rush of joy, (as if his hopes were actually on the point of their certain accomplishment,) when at last he saw

the figure of the Student coming towards him through the deep twilight (amounting almost to darkness) which had by this time wrapped the whole avenue where he was walking; and finally, the recurrence and reaction of his fears and doubts, when he who had promised to remove them stood fairly before him;—all these things, though not foreign to the purpose of our Tale, must not be dwelt on further.

Neither is it needful to relate in detail the conference which now took place between the Student and Aurelius. Suffice it to state that the former produced from his bosom a sealed paper, before presenting which to Aurelius, he exacted a promise from him, that it should not be opened till he arrived to within a certain distance of his home in Armorica, whither he enjoined his immediate return. He added, that Aurelius would find, within the paper, full directions as to the part which he would have to perform in the task, and also the day and

hour stated, at which he might look to see that task accomplished.

"There is one thing more," continued the Student, "which you must promise to observe, before I place this packet in your hands. contains within it another sealed paper, on which is written simply the name and dwellingplace of the person who now addresses you. This paper you must promise me not to open till after the day named for the completion of the desired work; and moreover, not to open it at all, in case the work should not be completed on the day named. Nay—do not start. You will bear in mind that I have not yet positively assured you the work will be performed—nor shall I do so. It is my full and firm belief that it will be accomplished, and on the day and hour specified within this paper. But in seeking to aid you in your desires, I profess to work by human means alone. I strive to read the secret will of Nature, and to work in conformity with that will; but not to

controul it, still less the mightier will of that Power to which Nature herself, and all her works, are subservient. That the Rocks which rise from out the surface of the sea at a certain point of the northern coast of Armorica, will disappear beneath the waters, on the day and at the hour named within this paper, I feel a full assurance. And if they do, you are at liberty to learn who it is who has helped you to the knowledge that they will so disappear: for you may, if you please, regard this as the extent of your obligation to me. But if, from whatever cause, my knowledge should mislead me —(and you must ere this have learned that knowledge can sometimes mislead us no less nay, even more—than ignorance itself)—all I ask, for my endeavour to serve you, is, that you will forget it was made."

"But," said Aurelius, as he took the paper, with a feeling of mysterious reverence not unmixed with his misgivings, and after having promised all that the Student required of him—

"But you have not yet named the price of your success."

"Oh," replied the Student, with a half smile upon his face, which Aurelius could not very well interpret, and into the meaning of which he was too much occupied with his own thoughts to feel either disposed or qualified to enquire very closely—"none but a lover must venture to put a price upon his lady's love. We will talk of that hereafter, if we should be destined to meet again: In any case I will not ask you to pay me more than a thousand pounds' weight of pure gold, for a secret which you have hitherto sought throughout Europe in vain!"

"Be it so, then!" said Aurelius instantly, and not seeming to notice the light and almost jesting expression which accompanied the Student's words. "I pledge my knightly word and Vow, that if this thing happen as you have said, a thousand pounds' weight of virgin gold shall be yours, if all my lands and goods can pur-

chase it. Is there aught else to be said or done?"

"Nothing," replied the Student, "but to join our hands upon the bargain, and to hope that we may meet again,—I, for my fame sake, more than for the wealth that is to follow it—you, for the sake of those unimagined joys that my secret toils will in that case have placed within your reach."

They then joined hands amid the almost total darkness that by this time enveloped the Pine Grove, and bidding each other a single "farewell," parted at once, and took their respective ways towards the city.

CHAPTER VII.

It need scarcely be told that Aurelius prepared for his immediate return to Armorica, in conformity with the injunctions of his unknown friend.

During his journey homeward, (at least till his near approach to the place at which the Student's packet was to be opened,) he felt as if his whole soul was hushed into a state of tranquil expectancy, which seemed to himself, when he thought upon it, utterly inconsistent with the complete suspense in which his hopes and fears as to the future hung balanced;—for the Student himself had not absolutely promised a favourable result to the enterprise.

The truth was, that the almost diseased activity and stress of mind which had perhaps caused the griefs of Aurelius in the first instance, and had certainly continued them in all their vigour up to the period of his last conference with the Student, had now, from the peculiar circumstances, both of hope and of fear, in which he was placed, almost entirely ceased, and his faculties were in a state of abeyance, which amounted almost to a suspension of their respective powers. His fears and his hopes—those opposing armies which

had so long been carrying on their active war within him—seemed to have mutually admitted a cessation of hostilities; and their victim was allowed for a brief space to enjoy a hollow truce, which the distracting conflicts he had so long been suffering under seemed to change, while it lasted, into a settled and soul-soothing peace, such as he had never expected again to experience.

But as Aurelius drew near to the spot at which he was to open the packet of the Student, and learn the share that he himself was to take in the performance of the great work, his hopes awoke from their brief slumber, and with them the fears which seemed to beset and accompany them everywhere, as the dark shadow accompanies the form which creates it. And when he found, on at last opening the packet, that all he had to do, towards bringing about the apparently miraculous effects which he sought to produce, was, to repeat, at certain periods, a few scarcely mysterious verses, which seemed to do

little more than express, in measured language, some of the wild thoughts that had often passed through his own heart and mind when pondering on the object of his desires, his misgivings began speedily to gain ground upon him, and he felt for a time that utter sinking and sickness of the heart which is worse to bear than the most active misery that fate can inflict on us.

But when again Aurelius reflected that the very day and hour were specified, at which he was to look for the accomplishment of his task, and that day not a distant one, his mind gradually resumed its lately restored tranquillity, and he felt as if he could now wait patiently for the great event.

The season was early spring, and the directions contained in the Student's packet were simply these—that Aurelius should arrange to reach the coast of Armorica a certain number of days before the vernal equinox, and should, at certain hours of each day, stand on the shore,

and repeat the verses inscribed on a tablet which formed part of the packet.

The hour at which Aurelius was to prepare the lady of his heart to expect the fulfilment of his task, was the noon of a certain day. But he was expressly directed to repeat the verses for the last time on the midnight preceding that day. And he was told to hope or fear, according to the omens which should then present themselves to him.

In brief, Aurelius arrived on the coast of Armorica at the time specified, but without making himself known to his friends; as he determined that unless the omens, named as likely to accompany the last repetition of the mystical verses, were favourable to his hopes, he would at once leave the spot, without waiting for the last hour, and without again exposing himself to the near influence of those charms from the almost fatal effects of which his late enquiries, and the mental occupation attendant on them, had in some degree relieved him.

Aurelius had hitherto fulfilled the directions of the Student, and the day of the night was now arrived, at the conclusion of which he was to expect an omen of his good or ill success on the morrow. And now it was that he first began to be fully sensible of the. near approach of that hour on which his future fate depended. But though this feeling caused his fears and hopes to come thronging upon him more thickly than ever, yet he had lately acquired sufficient controul over himself to enable him to await the event of the night with something like patience; a patience, however, made up less of a longing desire for its arrival, than of a doubtful and lingering wish to retard the progress of those hours which brought it on. And when he saw, by the glass which stood beside him, the latter hours of the night passing by him, one by one, he wondered how it was that each one seemed to pass so quickly.

Behold Aurelius, at length, standing on the

seashore, at the approach of midnight, on a low cliff, which formed a sort of natural terrace in front of the castle of the Lady Dorigen. The full moon was hanging in the heavens above him, and steeping all the scene around in its mild beauty: thus creating a seeming union and correspondence between everything which he beheld—everything, except the Rocks which rose abruptly from out the smooth and glittering surface of the ocean, and which were so placed as to present only their shaded portions to his sight.

Aurelius stood for a moment looking upon those Rocks, and seeing little else of all the scene. He then turned for awhile, and gazed, with a tender intensity of feeling, which presently brought tears of something like bliss into his eyes, on the habitation of Dorigen. And oh, what thoughts and images coursed through his busy brain as those tears were falling!

How long he had been gazing thus he knew

not, when he was awakened from his luxurious dream of imaginary joy, by the sound of the castle bell striking the midnight hour. This reminded him of his task, and he turned at once towards the sea, with the mystical tablet in his hand, and the tears still standing in his eyes—when, lo! what did he behold, or seem to behold? The Rocks that he had but now looked upon, and observed to be in their usual places, and of their usual form and height, seemed totally altered in their appearance, and, (could he believe his senses?) they seemed to rise not half their usual height above the surface of the waters!

At first, Aurelius utterly disbelieved his senses, and seemed to feel as if he were under the influence of the waking dream from which the sound of the castle bell had just roused him. He closed his eyes, and pressed his hands upon them; and then, opening them again, and gazing forth fearfully, he still seemed to see the same objects, under the same aspect.

His heart swelled and beat till it almost stopped his breath, and he stood for a few moments looking at the sight before him, with every feature of his face, as well as every faculty of his mind, open, as it were, to absorb and drink in what he saw, or seemed to see;—for he could scarcely yet be sure that his senses did not deceive him.

Suddenly, Aurelius thought of his unperformed task, and of the omen that was to attend it; and he instantly addressed himself to his tablets, and pronounced the Invocation which was inscribed on them.

Ye who lift its loftiest waves, ?
Ye who stay their fierce career,
Listen in your twilight caves!

Spirits of the winged wind!

Ye who wake its wildest tones,

Ye whose wills its terrors bind,

Listen on your viewless thrones!

CHATSWORTH.

Spirits of the teeming earth!

Ye who feed its central fires,

Ye who tend its gentlest birth,

Listen from your mountain choirs!

Spirits of wind, and earth, and sea,
Mightiest, gentlest, each and all,
Wheresoe'er your dwellings be,
Listen to a lover's call!

Brightest, beautifullest, best!

Mightiest, gentlest! virgin Queen!

Goddess of the starry vest,

From thy crescent couch oh lean!

Lean, and listen! without THEE,
Wind, Earth, Waters, might in vain
Seek to do my bidding. See
How those Rocks deform thy reign!

How they break the fields of light
Where thy subject spirits play!
Sink, oh sink them from thy sight!
Bid them pass, like thoughts, away

As Aurelius repeated these words, he kept looking out intently on the Rocks, which every moment sank lower and lower, beneath the still surface of the waters, till at last they totally vanished from his sight, and the sea lay beneath the moon, as far as the eye could reach on every side, one flat unbroken expanse of dusky light, except where the gorgeous band of gently moving moon-beams played and flickered across it, from the edge of the horizon, down to the very foot of the cliff where Aurelius was now standing, and against which the waters now lay.

Blank amazement was the first feeling that came to Aurelius, at the sight of this seeming miracle. But this feeling immediately gave way to the almost fearful joy which rushed upon his heart, when he thought of the consequences that waited on what he saw: for he now felt that his task was finally accomplished, and forgot that anything he might see to-night was merely to be regarded as an omen of what was to happen on the morrow.

The first impulse of Aurelius was, to hasten at once to the castle of Dorigen, and claim the fulfilment of her Vow. But this, the hour precluded; besides which, the profound sentiment of respect for the Lady Dorigen which more than ever blended with his passionate love, induced him almost instantly to pause, now that he seemed to behold the object of all his hopes placed within his grasp. He must at least ponder on the fittest means of making her acquainted with his return.

After having again, therefore, satisfied himself that his senses had not deceived him, and that the Rocks really had disappeared, he at once departed to his place of sojourn, and passed the night in pondering on the mode he should adopt, of communicating with the Lady Dorigen.

At length the morning came; and Aurelius despatched a young page whom he had brought with him from Italy with directions that he should crave to see he Lady Dorigen, and having acquainted her with the return of his

lord, should inform her that at the hour of noon, on that day, she might look to see performed the task which she had imposed on Aurelius at their last meeting.

Aurelius then issued forth from his retreat, and proceeded to the sea-shore, intending to gaze once more on the scene of the night before, and fully satisfy his still doubting reason, as to the reality of what he had witnessed.

On reaching the spot, what was his mingled astonishment and dismay, at finding the whole scene just as he had been accustomed to see it! There the Rocks were, lifting up their pointed crests as heretofore, and breaking with their rude shadows the otherwise lovely line of splendour which the newly-risen sun was flinging over the still waters!

Aurelius was on the point of yielding himself up at once to the passionate despair, blended with a certain strange alarm, that now seized upon him: for he could not help fancying that what he had seemed to behold the night before was but the vision of a distempered brain, and that his wits were leaving him just as he had begun to gain glimpses of that true use of them which his recent travel and intercourse in foreign lands had opened to him.

In a few moments, however, he recollected that he was bid to regard the appearances of the preceding night merely as omens of the final event. And in this hope, therefore, and whether he was to regard what he had witnessed as a vision or a reality, he once more put on patience, and waited the return of his messenger, who presently arrived with the intelligence that the Lady Dorigen had received him graciously had smiled, though not without an expression of strange wonder passing across her face, at the delivery of the latter part of his message, -had enquired anxiously, and in the kindest words, after his lord's health,—and had desired him to say to Aurelius that she should not fail, noon, to look forth from her favourite window upon the sea.

CHAPTER VIII.

WE must now return to Dorigen herself. Her first feeling on receiving the messenger of Aurelius was, an unfeigned joy of heart, at the news which he brought her of his lord's health, coupled as it was with the proof (for such she took his message to be) that time and travel had cured his former cause of absence, and had even so fully restored him to himself, that he could venture to recommence his friendly intercourse with her and Arviragus, by a jesting reference to that parting which had left so serious an impression upon her mind.

When, however, the page had left her for a short time, Dorigen began to think a little less lightly of the message which Aurelius had sent her; or rather, she began to fear that it might indicate a change in his mental condition, directly opposite to that which she

had at first supposed. She recollected, too, that he had, at parting from her, intimated his intention of not again presenting himself before her, unless to perform the wild project which her last words had suggested to him; and she began to fear that his imagination had dwelt upon this project, till he had at last persuaded himself of the possibility of its performance; and that now he had returned, with his mind in even a less fit state for that friendly intercourse which she had at first anticipated, than when he departed two years ago.

As to the actual performance of the task in question—that never once passed across the mind of Dorigen. So entirely occupied was she with her kind-hearted wishes and fears, touching the welfare of another, that she at first only recollected the general purport of the message Aurelius had sent her, and entirely overlooked that part of it which (if she could admit even the possibility of the project to which it related) so fearfully concerned herself.

While Dorigen was turning in her mind the uneasy fears with which the message of Aurelius had now filled her, she was joined by her husband. Arviragus immediately observed that something was troubling her; and the sight of him as immediately determined her as to the course she should pursue. Accordingly she at once related to him that part of her last conference with Aurelius which a natural, though she now thought a weak and foolish scruple, had induced her to withhold from him; and then she told him that Aurelius was returned to Armorica, and the message she just received from him; and she begged Arviragus to see him immediately, and ascertain the true state of one whom they both still looked upon as a friend.

Momentary as the feeling was which came over Arviragus, at the relation of this strange Vow, and of the still more strange message of Aurelius in reference to it, it cast a shadow upon his face, as it past, which was not unobserved by Dorigen. Both the feeling, and the expres-

sion of it, however, passed away as quickly as they came; and Arviragus at first thought of nothing but how he might second the kind wishes of Dorigen, as to the state of mind into which they feared Aurelius might have fallen. But as they both at once recollected that Aurelius was not at his own castle, and that therefore they could not communicate with him till they should again hear from him, they determined to wait that event.

In the mean time, the hour of noon was approaching; and there is no denying that every step it made towards Dorigen and Arviragus, seemed to increase a sort of restless and indistinct anxiety, which they both secretly felt, and which both with equal pertinacity agreed in attributing to their interest in the condition of Aurelius; and which condition they could not hope to know from their own observation, until after the hour he had indicated in his message.

At length, when the hour of noon was near

at hand, they repaired together to one of their chambers, overlooking the terrace; as Dorigen wished to be able to tell Aurelius, jestingly, that she had not neglected his injunctions, touching the promised miracle.

Who shall tell the mutual feelings of Dorigen and Arviragus, standing as they did in the presence of each other, when they observed, on approaching the windows of the apartment to which they had now repaired, that some of the smaller Rocks, upon the coast, had wholly disappeared from sight, and that the larger ones had sunk to less than half their usual height above the waters! For some moments they looked alternately at each other, and at the Rocks, with a stunning and bewildering sensation, which caused a temporary suspension of all consciousness, except of that sensation itself.

On recovering from this state of blank and incredulous surprise, Dorigen was the first to speak.

"What can this be?" she exclaimed, turning to Arviragus—who did not seem to hear her, but kept gazing fixedly on a particular point in the distance.

"Arviragus," she continued, again gazing forth on the sea, "do you observe the Rocks?" She paused for a few moments, and then added, "They seem sinking from my sight, every moment, as I look upon them! Is it fancy? See! Arviragus, see! do you not see?"

And she pointed eagerly with her hand towards a particular projecting corner of one of the Rocks, which finally disappeared beneath the water as she spoke.

"Dorigen!" exclaimed Arviragus, without noticing what she said, but motioning with his hand for her to come close to him—"Dorigen—did you see? That point! It sank this moment as I watched it! What can this mean?".

As he turned and looked upon her eagerly, the blood left her cheeks and lips, and she stood motionless as a statue, with her finger still pointing, and kept gazing on the Rocks, as if, like the basilisk's eye, they at once fascinated and transfixed her.

"Dorigen!" exclaimed Arviragus, forgetting all things but the fearful change that he beheld in her—"Dorigen!" and as he touched her, he almost started to feel that her flesh was chilly cold, and trembled in his grasp.

"Look!" she exclaimed, without moving, or taking away her eyes from the sea—"Look! they sink! they sink one after another!—My Vow!"

Then, after a brief pause, she seemed to recover her self-possession; the blood rushed tumultuously back into her cheeks; and as she turned and looked on Arviragus, and leaned within his opened arms, she felt as if she had awakened from a hideous dream, and was once more herself, in being his.

But her joy was momentary. In brief, they turned again to look upon the Rocks; and as they kept gazing, alternately on them and on each other, the objects of their gaze gradually sank more and more beneath the water; till at last, as the bell of the castle struck the hour of noon, they every one utterly disappeared, and left the ocean an unbroken expanse, as far as the eye could reach in all directions.

Dorigen and Arviragus looked at each other for a few moments, without uttering a word.

At last, Dorigen said, "Arviragus—this is no mockery—no vision;—and Aurelius has my Vow—my solemn, sworn Vow!"

"Which must be paid, if he demands it," said Arviragus, with a sad solemnity of voice and manner, and as if almost unconscious that he was speaking his thoughts aloud.

"Nay," said Dorigen, "but he is generous—and—"

"Let us speak no more of this now, my beloved Dorigen," said Arviragus, interrupting her—"Come, let us leave this chamber—" and he instantly, without more words, led her away to another part of the castle.

CHAPTER IX.

MEANWHILE, Aurelius was watching the disappearing Rocks, with even a more intense surprise and curiosity than Dorigen and Arviragus themselves: for their emotions were the creation of a moment; while his had been gathering strength, day by day, and hour by hour, from the moment that this new hope had been awakened within him; and his fears had strengthened these emotions no less than his hopes: till at length, when he beheld the last point of the last rock sink beneath the waters, and leave the sea one unbroken plain, he clapped his hands together, and shouting forth an exclamation of mingled joy and wonder, sank for a few moments into that state of vacant abstraction which at first attends the sudden and perfect fulfilment either of our hopes or our fears.

Recovering from this state, Aurelius once

more assured himself that the sight before him was no delusion; and then he began to think of what, until now, he had scarcely dwelt on at all during the whole time that he had been induced to look, with something like hope, for the accomplishment of his task: namely, the final consequences of that accomplishment. The task itself had so absorbed his mind, that that had all along seemed the end at which he was aiming. That end he had now reached; and it seemed to open before him a new one, which he had scarcely permitted himself even to imagine till now.

The first momentary feeling of Aurelius was, that the accomplishment of the prescribed task had removed all obstacles to his wishes, and that Dorigen would now be—his! He presently, however, recollected that the performance of a Vow was one thing, and the interchange of human affections another. He found, too, what he had scarcely observed until now, and perhaps never would have observed but for

within himself as to the extraordinary circumstances in which he was now suddenly placed,—that though his love for Dorigen had increased rather than diminished during his absence from her, that absence, and the circumstances attending it, had totally changed the character of his love, and given to it an imaginative and intellectual colouring, which had not before belonged to it.

In truth, the love of Aurelius had been created and called into life by the beauties of Dorigen's person merely; and it had been nourished and strengthened by those beauties alone, up to the very moment of his quitting her, and even in the manifest absence of the least gleam of hope: a trial, it must be confessed, over which no other kind of love could have triumphed. But when this perpetual food and fuel were taken away, and it was called upon either to sustain itself upon the airy aliment of imagination alone, or to

waste away and wither in its own consuming flames, it did the latter; but from its ashes a phænix love arose, the seeds and elements of which ever exist in that other love which springs from the senses, and which elements lie dormant, or awake and germinate into beauty, according to the nature of the soil on which they fall, and the circumstances which surround them.

Aurelius pondered on his passion for Dorigen, and on the signal change which he now began to perceive had taken place in it, till the bell of the castle told him that an hour had elapsed since noon, and that consequently his appointed task was in all things fulfilled; for as he looked across the sea, his gaze passed uninterruptedly over its whole space, which was now illumined by the emerging sun, and beautified by the reflections of the breaking and dispersing clouds, and of the blue sky which every here and there opened among them.

Without waiting to look with any distinct-

ness into the future, or even to question his own purposes, Aurelius determined at once to seek an interview with the Lady Dorigen. He therefore immediately sent his page with a message, couched in the most respectful terms, merely begging to know if he might wait on the Lady.

Poor Dorigen! The sight of the page turned her heart sick within her, as she sat, waiting his coming, in one of the lower apartments of the castle.

When the page had delivered his bidding, she paused for a few moments, and then merely replied, that in an hour she would receive the Lord Aurelius, on the terrace leading to the gardens of the castle. She then immediately sought her husband,—who had previously retired to his own apartments, for the purpose of consulting with himself, and of leaving Dorigen to do the like, as to the circumstances in which they were mutually placed by the fatal Vow of Dorigen.

The loving and beloved wife and husband met,

with looks and feelings—how different from the evidences of that pure and uninterrupted joy which they had hitherto invariably experienced at the sight and in the presence of one another! But there were no indications of empty or unseemly passion, on either side—no impatient and vain regrets—no recriminating anger. They took each other's hand, and sat down side by side, and for some minutes remained utterly silent as if they felt that speech was a thing which might increase their cause of sorrow, but could not remove or lessen it. Both seemed, by mutual consent, to have put on an air and look of funereal stillness, which indicated that they had met together to bury what had hitherto been the mutual life and joy of their hearts, but which fate—a fate at which they presumed not to repine—had now suddenly reft from them; and they had nothing left to do, but bid it a final farewell.

"My beloved Dorigen," said Arviragus, after having looked at her mournfully for some

time, "this grief which has fallen upon us, is one that may not be put into words, and that need not; for no words can avert or lessen it. But something must be said, touching it; for there is still left to us a choice of miseries. This fatal Vow is either to be broken—"

Dorigen's face grew pale as he uttered the last word—

"Or to be performed."

She shuddered all over, as if she had seen an adder in her path, and then the blood rushed back to her cheeks and lips, and she grasped the hand of Arviragus convulsively.

"If performed," he continued, "we are lost—lost to ourselves—lost to one another. If broken, the TRUTH of my beloved Dorigen—that Truth" he exclaimed, with a fervent, and almost passionate expression, which, however, lasted only while he uttered the next few words—"that Truth which lifts and likens her to those above, even more than her wondrous beauty, is gone from her for ever, and with it that

inward joy which nothing else can give—not even a mutual love like ours!"

Here he paused for a while, and she seemed to sink into a deep abstraction, as the sounds of his voice ceased. At length he asked—

"What says my Dorigen? Let her forgive me if I am supposing that she can pause, between her truth and any other earthly thing. But ——"

"Oh! my Arviragus"—she replied, interrupting him, in a voice, the mournful sweetness of which shook for a moment his resolute thoughts from their foundation. "Oh! Arviragus, I have long felt that our bliss, so bright and unbroken as it was, could not endure. In my dreams, at least, I have felt this: my waking thoughts and feelings have been all happiness, for they have been all with you. Yet now that grief is come, I feel as if the very thought of it were new to me—a monster to which even my dreaming fancy has hitherto been a stranger. And the thought of

it makes a child of me. I must weep, when I should act."

She was silent for a space, yet did not remove her looks from the face of Arviragus, though the tears poured down her cheeks like rain. He spoke not, nor even lifted his eyes from the ground, where he had cast them the moment her voice fell upon his hearing. After a little while she resumed.

"Tell me, Arviragus, what I should do: for my own weak and perplexed will does but mock and blind me. Tell me, and I will do it—ay, even though it bid me break my plighted Vow." She paused a moment, and then added mournfully,—"And yet, what matter which course I take; since either makes me unfit for your love?"

"Oh! speak not so," said Arviragus firmly;
"the love I bear towards you is a thing that circumstance can touch not. It is not that which moves me; it is to think that my Dorigen—But no"—he resumed after a slight pause, in

which he seemed to brace his faculties up to the point from which they had for a few moments fallen—"no—this matter must not be thought of after this fashion. Dorigen's truth must not be put in competition with any earthly thing, or with all earthly things besides. And if she so puts it, it is for my sake;—which must not be. You hid me tell you what you should do. Thus I reply. Act, Dorigen, as if Arviragus lived not, or had never lived. He never did live, to good, till you wrought him to that life; and he holds no life but what is yours. Think of him, then, as one who will love you, whatever befals, and will love you the more, the more you need his love."

She rose up as he spoke, and fell upon his neck, and wept silently for a space. Then, summoning all her spirits, she looked in his face, with an expression of high-wrought resolution in her eyes, not unmixed with a touch of triumphant joy, as she said:—"Arviragus, thy Dorigen's soul, at least, shall be kept worthy of

(.)

such love. For the rest, she can die, if need be."

And, without another word, she turned and departed.

CHAPTER X.

At the moment that Dorigen left the presence of her lord, she felt as if there was no act of heroism she could not perform, to make or keep herself worthy of his pure and deep affection. But, oh! how her woman's heart quailed within her, as she paced the terrace on which she waited the coming of Aurelius! In extremes, however deadly, the courage of woman is often heroic as that of man. But courage is a virtue opposed to the very instincts of her nature, and therefore cannot last but in actual presence of the objects which call it forth. Dorigen thought of her past happiness, and of that which she had looked for in the long future; and as the whole seemed

to take the form of a rich vision which a thunderclap had dispersed, she wept aloud, as a child weeps when awakened in the morning from a night-long dream of joy.

When the time, however, was close at hand that was to bring Aurelius to her presence, she called home her wandering thoughts, and fixed them all upon the task which awaited her. And when she felt that if her fatal Vow compelled her to embrace shame and dishonour, at least it did not command her to live under them, she addressed herself, with a solemn gravity, to call to mind the many virtuous wives and maidens whose lot had been as heavy as hers might be, and who had become immortal by their heroic courage, in throwing it off at the cheap cost of their lives. And as she ran through the catalogue of their names, and dwelt with a kind of fond sympathy on the particular sorrow of each, her face resumed its wonted calmness, and she almost forgot her own grief in pity for that of others.

In the midst of these thoughts and feelings, she heard a door close, and footsteps approaching. The next moment Aurelius stood before her.

Her heart once more sank and fainted within her, and she stood silent and motionless, and scarcely seemed to recognise his presence. But as he sank upon his knee, and was about to pay his homage upon her hand, her whole frame seemed to suffer a momentary convulsion; and then she became calm, and spoke thus:—

"Rise, my Lord Aurelius. Nay, speak not," she continued, as he motioned to address her—"speak not, but rise and hear me. The sight which I have seen to-day, however brought about—whether by Art, or Nature, or by some strange unholy Power that belongs to neither—leaves little to be said between us. You have my solemn Vow; (how obtained, and with what motive given, I ask you not;) and the forfeit of it must needs have been paid, at

whatever fatal cost, if Dorigen had been the sole arbitress of her own fate. But she is not so. Nay—hear, and interrupt me not! I know full well that I should have thought of this, before I pledged my faith and truth to give you that which is not mine to give. though my husband's commands (which a true wife holds to above all earthly things, no less through love than duty) might absolve me from one part of the fatal consequences of my oath, they could not absolve me from another; they could not cure the violated truth attendant on a broken Vow. Think, then, Aurelius, what a husband Dorigen is wife to, when she stands here by his consent, to say to you, that if you demand the forfeiture of her oath, rather than she should break that oath, it must and shall be paid!"

As Dorigen spake, the blood rushed into the face of Aurelius, and coursed through his veins with a swift motion, that for a period stopped his breath. But he spoke not, and, after a few moments' pause, the lady continued to address him, with the same deadly composure of manner as before, and the same sad solemnity of voice.

"You have told me that you love me," said: she. "Think of his love who has mine! think what that love must be, when it would rather part at once from all which is its bliss (for he cannot think that I would live under dishonour) than see its object violate her Vow; which, however, I must and would violate, though at my soul's peril, if he were to bid me. Aurelius," she continued, "you were wont to be generous, good, and noble. It was these qualities which drew from me the fatal power you now possess, to destroy me. Speak not to me now," she added, as she saw that he was about to open his lips, for she seemed to dread his words like the stroke of death.—"Speak not to me now, but think on what I have said, and lay it to your heart. Till to-morrow, farewell." And she was turning to leave him.

"Lady,"—exclaimed Aurelius, "I beseech. you, stay! What I would say, must be said, now. I dare not trust myself till to-morrow. Now that I have again looked upon your, beauties, it might be fatal to us both. I came hither but to sue and bend as heretofore, not to claim or to demand; to lay my duteous homage at your feet, and take with gratitude whatever your goodness might please to bestow, of pity or regard. True, I have spent whole years in compassing that which (I scarce know how) has this day been accomplished. And there has not passed an hour of those years, that I have not fed upon the hope (vain and empty as it might seem, and did, till yesternight) which your gentle pity gave me at our parting, and which mocked while it sustained Do not contemn or hate me, lady, for cherishing that on which my very being hung. I had died without it. But it was a hope alone that I lived on. Think not my profane thoughts ever passed beyond it, affronting the deep reverence of my love! Pardon the

word! It is the last time I shall utter it. Indeed, I speak not of what is, but what is past. Your words have awakened thoughts within me, which, if they have slumbered so long, were rocked to their unwholesome rest by the storm of passion that has so shaken and possessed me, since I first beheld you. Those words have restored me-may I say to myself? At least, they have made me feel less unworthy than I was, of that esteem which you once expressed for me, and the mere memory of which strengthens me to do an act, if not so high and noble in its self-devotion as that of your beloved and happy lord, Arviragus, almost as difficult in the doing. Lady, I remit the forfeiture of your Vow, and leave you as free as when it was unpronounced."

As Aurelius uttered these last words, a wild joy darted into the eyes, and flushed the late pale cheeks, of Dorigen; and when he had concluded them, she rushed past him, as if unconscious that he was present, and was

husband. But a few moments recalled her to herself; and she returned to Aurelius, with her face overspread and lighted up with a new radiance, that seemed to emanate from it like a glory, and communicate something of its joyous brightness to the till now sad and steadfast features of Aurelius.

She looked at him for a moment, and then fell on her knees, and took his hand, and pressed it to her lips, without uttering a word. Aurelius raised her in an instant, and again spoke:

"Does, then, the Lady Dorigen give me back that esteem which her late fears, and this new joy which springs within her, tell me she must have long since taken away? If she does, how are my poor toils and sorrows overpaid!"

"Aurelius," said she, "you have, by a word, changed me from the most lost and hopeless, to the happiest of wives; and in making me

happy, have made the noblest and the gentlest of husbands no less so: for we are one in all things. Ask but yourself, then, if you can be that husband's friend; and, if you can, be sure you may be mine, and we may all be blessed and bettered by the union. Come to us tomorrow; (for to-day we shall both of us be too happy to think as we ought of him who has made us so); and let me place your hands in one another's, and he shall thank you, as my poor tongue cannot. Let me seek him now. Forgive me this impatience to be gone; but, if you knew how I long to pour my new-born bliss into his heart, and to share it with him! Let me seek him now. Farewell! we shall look for you to-morrow. And let me once more say,—ask your own generous heart how we should greet you when we all three meet together; and be sure our esteem will not lag behind your claims on it. Farewell!"

So saying, the Lady Dorigen left Aurelius to pursue his thoughtful way homeward, and hastened to join her husband. Let us not again intrude ourselves into the presence of that now happy pair—happier than ever, henceforward; for this one sad day has thrown an added brightness over all the future years of their life; since, in dwelling with a fond delay on that which they are, they do not (as they once did) forget that which they might have been.

CHAPTER XI.

As for Aurelius, at first he found himself scarcely less happy in the happiness he had conferred than those on whom he had bestowed it; for he now for the first time learned, that there is no pleasure so entirely satisfying as that which grows out of its communication to others.

But Aurelius had scarcely resumed possession of his castle, and caught the first glimpses of that calm joy which awaited him as the chosen friend and companion of Arviragus and Dorigen, than he recollected the claims upon him of the unknown Student, and the necessity of instantly providing for the fulfilment of them. He had pledged his knightly Vow to pay the Student a thousand pounds' weight of gold, if the event he had predicted should be completed at the appointed hour. It had been completed in every particular; and if he who sought its performance had chosen to forego the reward he might have claimed for it, the cost was no less due to him who had brought it about.

But when Aurelius applied himself to the new task of getting together the means of fulfilling his engagement with the Student, he soon found, that in the thoughtless generosity of his newly awakened hopes, what he had promised amounted to nearly the whole value of his estates.

This discovery cast a serious gloom over the fair prospect that had just opened upon him. But there was no room for delay or consideration. His voluntary promise had been given;

the conditions of it were fulfilled; and it never ence occurred to him that he could break it, much less did he deliberate with himself whether he would do so or not. He therefore, immediately took the means of procuring one moiety of the sum he had promised; and having placed the five hundred pounds' weight of pure gold in a chest, he took a brief leave of Arviragus and Dorigen, and set out with it, in search of the Student; intending to relate to him the circumstances in which he was placed, and to solicit his forbearance for a while, till he should be enabled to fulfil his promise to the uttermost.

Aurelius found the youthful Student in the same city where he had left him: and having caused the chest of gold to be conveyed to his dwelling, he followed it thither, and presented himself before him.

The Student received him with that mild gravity of demeanour which had never left him during their former conferences.

Well," said he, after a friendly greeting

had passed between them, and he had looked for a moment in the face of Aurelius, "I fear I need not ask the Lord Aurelius if my power to serve him has proved answerable to his wishes. He does not speak or look like one who rejoices in an accomplished purpose; still less like a lover triumphing in the possession of a mistress whom nothing but a supposed miracle could give to him."

"My task," said Aurelius gravely, "thanks to your aid and directions, has been accomplished in all things; and if I do not triumph in the end to which it was to lead me,"—(and here there is no denying that an expression of something more than mere sadness—a look of utter disappointment—passed across his face; but it presently cleared away, as he proceeded in the next few words,—) "it is because I triumph in a still higher bliss—that of bestowing a blessing, instead of receiving one."

Aurelius then proceeded to relate the circumstance attending the accomplishment of the task: the pitcous grief of Dorigen; the noble self-devotion of her husband; the triumph of reason and courtesy over passion in himself; and finally, the happy consequences that promised to attend that triumph, so far as his merely mental condition was concerned.

"In what remains to be said," he continued, somewhat sadly, "let me be as brief as possible; and be sure I should not have troubled you with a word on this matter, but that the headlong passion which possessed me when last we met, has led me to make a promise of which I am now to beg that your generosity (for it is to that alone I must appeal) would remit the fulfilment for a brief space. I have here brought you one-half of the promised reward of your assistance."

The Student smiled as Aurelius pointed at the chest containing the gold. Aurelius observed him with some surprise, but he continued:

"My whole estates will barely suffice to

I have to ask of you, therefore, is, that you will bear with me patiently, while I so dispose them, that I may to the letter fulfil my voluntary Vow."

The Student again smiled, as Aurelius concluded these words; and after a few moments' pause, he spoke thus:

"Forgetful that I was! In pursuing the invisible wealth of knowledge, I had entirely overlooked the substantial riches that awaited me, as one of the results of that knowledge. I remember, now, the promise you made me at our parting. You freely admit, then, that my part of the contract has been performed to the letter, and that the rich reward is earned."

"I do," said Aurelius.

"But there is one thing," continued the Student, "which, I almost fear, even the noble heart of the Lord Aurelius will not permit him so readily to allow. It is this;—that an unknown Student, with no patrimony but his

honour, and no wealth but his knowledge, holds as free a right to do an act of courtesy, as if the blood of princes flowed in his veins, and the wealth of a nation swelled his coffers. That knowledge (such as it is) which enabled me to serve the Lord Aurelius, was not purchased by gold; and I would fain not barter it. I have no claim to this reward which the honour of the Lord Aurelius now proffers me. I did but jest in asking it; and have no way earned it, more than in telling him beforehand of what neither I, nor he, nor all the Powers and Principalities of the world, could have hastened or retarded for a single moment-What I ask of him, therefore, is, that he will receive an act of courtesy in the same spirit in which he would perform one; and that he will be generous enough not again to offer me what he must feel that I could not accept with honour."

There is no need to describe the gratified surprise of Aurelius, at this noble behaviour

of the young Student. He pressed upon him, not without some difficulty, sufficient to secure him a learned leisure for the rest of his life; and after having sojourned with him long enough to confirm that taste for the acquirement of knowledge which he had unconsciously gained during his late travels in search of that which was not to be found, the Lord Aurelius returned to his castle in Armorica, a wiser, better, and happier man than anything but his own follies and sorrows could have made him.

A BRIEF pause followed the conclusion of the foregoing Tale; and then a conversation ensued, portions only of which the purposes of these records require that we should relate. Being interdicted, as we have said, from indicating the respective writer of each Tale, we are reluct antly compelled to give the reader the trouble of assigning the remarks to their several owners, in the best way he can.

A.—"And do you really expect English husbands and wives, of the Nineteenth Century, to sympathize with actions and feelings uch as you attribute to your immaculate Dorigen, and your immovable Arviragus?"

B.—"If they do not, it is no fault of mine,—nor, perhaps, of their own. But if they do not, it is only a reason the more for telling them such stories,—since the natural inference is, that a spurious and sickly sympathy with their class

has overlaid that natural and healthy sympathy with their kind, in the absence of which they may be very good English wives and husbands, but they have ceased to be members of that great human family which the imagination alone can 'bind each to each in natural piety.'"

A.—"But has not our only accredited casuist;
Paley, taught us that other vows besides those
of lovers are 'made to be broken'—not merely
rash or wicked vows, but inconvenient ones?
such, for instance, as that of promising a
highway-robber a future gratuity, if he will
be good enough to spare our lives?"

B.—"Yes;—and being a wise man, and an archdeacon to boot, Paley has taught us wisely and archdeaconly, no doubt: so if you think my Tale will teach the reverse—if you suppose it will tempt any of the married flirts of Mayfair to tamper with their conjugal fidelity, and their lords gravely to look on, or to acquiesce in the enormity, (as the 'Sorrows of Werter' impelled silly young gentlemen to blow out

their want of brains, and Schiller's 'Robbers' enticed scampish ones to turn Banditti,) you have only to accompany it by an abstract of Paley's argument, and so put the matter on its right footing! But in the meantime be pleased to observe, that sympathy has nothing to do with the desire or the impulse of imitation, or even with the sentiment of applause."

A.—"But then your Breton landholder, lugging half the value of his estate in hard cash, scores of leagues (before pavés were heard of, much less rail-roads) to take up a verbal 'promise to pay,' for which there was no 'value received,' and which could never be presented; and (credat Judeas!) a poor German Scholar refusing the cart-load of money, on a point of courtesy!—courtesy, above all things, in a German Student!! I'm afraid your 'miscellaneous' readers will think you have over-stepped even the 'ample verge' of our compact, and have not only shown them human nature by 'the light that never was on sea or

land,' but have introduced them to people who are in that predicament—subjects of the preadamite Sultans, or cousins-german of the Man
in the Moon!"

B.—"Well, if they should, all I can say in reply is that I have erred in good company, and have, in my simplicity, been putting faith in the human nature that is to be found in such shallow pretenders as Chaucer and Boccaccio, instead of seeking for it on the shelves of the Minerva Library."

A.—"Do you mean then that your Tale is to be found in either of those writers?"

B.—"In both, if I remember rightly—that is to say, the brief rudiments of it, comprised in some half-dozen pages. And I suspect that unless each of us can, in case of need, shelter ourselves under some such 'panoply of proof,' there will be no salvation for us from the shafts of that criticism which believes nothing but what it sees."

A.—"Well—there is something in that, I confess."

Here the contributor of the Tale next to be submitted to the judgment of our critical coterie joined in the conversation.

"Yes," said he—"and there is more than you seem to perceive; there is the additional advantage, in taking subjects from accredited writers, of being certain beforehand that they are at least adapted to the developement of character and passion. And if great writers themselves have felt this, (which they seem to have done for there is no end to their repetitions of each other, so far as mere subject goes,) small ones are scarcely safe in adopting any other rule. For my part, if I were to set up for a writer of Tales, of the particular kind we have been speaking of, I should as soon think, now-a-days, of inventing a subject, as of trying to invent the steam-engine over again, or discover a new road from Coventry Street to Hyde-park Corner. -And, so far from scrupling to avail myself of anything in their mode of treating the subject which might happen to be suitable to my own,

I should think it a senseless presumption to avoid doing so, provided the respective forms of our compositions were sufficiently distinct.

"I hope, too," continued he, " à propos to the particular subject-matter of the Tale I am to have the honour of reading to you tomorrow evening,—that we shall all of us keep as clear as our friend has done, of that everlasting blunder, about Love, which has been at once the staple and the stumbling-block of modern fiction, from a period 'to which the memory of man runneth not to the contrary.' Who can wonder that the appetite of the English public is sickly, when it has been fed since its babyhood on nothing more invigorating than eau sucré flavoured with huile de rose? If there is one thing more false than another, it is the theory on which our love-stories are one and all constructed: for the exceptions are only just numerous enough to prove the rule. Even our best writers retain, as if it were a religious truth, the childish fiction which. their match-making mamas—have rejected in practice, as entirely as they have left off ruffs and fardingales. English women, now-a-days, have grown, on the subject of love, a great deal 'wiser than they know;' and accordingly, 'love-matches,' where other matters than the love are not conformable, are as rare now as they used to be rife; and where they do happen (among the cultivated classes I mean—for the rest still hold to the creed of their great-grandmothers,) it is between sensitive young ladies and their father's footman, or precocious young gentlemen and their pedagogue's daughter, or their mother's maid."

"But what," it was observed, "is to become of our writers of fiction—prose or poetry—if they depose Love from his present supreme seat in their Olympus?"

"To the poets," was the reply, "I have nothing to say. They have always been a century or so behind their age, and I suspect

their 'so potent art' depends on their continuing so; for it is their business to throw us back upon the pleasant follies and the brilliant fancies of youth, not carry us forward to the sober wisdom which supersedes them. But prose-writers, (even when they deal with fiction,) should be in advance of their age—or not be at all. But I do not ask them, in the present case, to serve their favourite god as Jupiter once served a deity of still higher pretensions,—kick him out of heaven entirely,—but only to place him on his proper and legitimate footing there, instead of assigning him (as you seem to admit they have done) the supreme seat. In the drama of actual life the passion of love, now-a-days, plays pretty much the part it is entitled to play; but in the fictions which profess to reflect that life, it usurps the whole stage. The consequence is, that those who get their knowledge of life from books (and the category now comprises nine-tenths of the whole world) are

opublic instructors,' that, though they manage to go pretty right, it is (like the crabs and the watermen) with their eyes fixed in an opposite direction; they make, for the most part, tolerably reasonable marriages, and then, by way of trimming the balance, they break half of them, on the plea that they were not 'made in heaven.'

"But enough of this. All I wished to do, in mooting the point, was, to smooth the way for a Tale which turns on the heretical belief that Love is at least as much under the controul of reason as any other of the passions, and that the certain cure for a silly and ignoble love, is a wise and noble one."

LOVE CURED BY LOVE.

CHAPTER I.

During the period when the Portuguese maintained a friendly footing in Tidore, one of the Moluccas, it happened that the native King of that island, while engaged in his favourite amusement of fishing, was surprised and carried off by the emissaries of a neighbouring chief,—a man of a bold, crafty, and savage nature, who was at war with all the other islands.

As the King of Tidore was greatly beloved by his people, this event cast a gloom over all hearts,—which, though lessened, was not dispelled, by the knowledge of those lofty virtues, and that grave wisdom, which marked the character of Quisara, the king's sister, who, by right of succession, exercised the sovereign sway in his absence.

This Princess presented a noble example of

those qualities with which unassisted nature is capable of filling the heart, and adorning the mind, where no adverse influences are at hand to counteract her workings. To all the lofty bearing, and what would in a more refined age and country be deemed the unfeminine boldness. which had been generated by her station, as Princess of an uncultivated and warlike people, she added a rich and almost voluptuous softness, both of sentiment and demeanour, which gathered and fixed around her all that feeling of sex, which her higher and more imposing qualities might otherwise have dissipated: so that while her male subjects looked up to her with a sort of awed and reverent admiration, as a being sent by Heaven to be their head and chief, there were few among them who did not at times regard her in the softer light of a woman, made to be cherished and beloved.

This last effect was greatly assisted by the extraordinary beauty of the Princess; who was in the bloom of youth, and as much surpassed

her countrywomen in the charms of her person as in the qualities of her mind. The chief object of her worship, the glorious Sun himself, seemed to have glowed upon her with looks of more tender love than was his wont, and had forborne to dye her features in that dark livery which he had compelled all other of his swarthy subjects to wear, in this his own peculiar clime.

At the period when the King of Tidore had been carried off by the stratagem of his crafty enemy, he was entertaining at his Court two noble guests, who came thither avowedly as suitors for the hand of the Princess Quisara. One of these was the King of Bakam, a neighbouring island; the other a young Prince, who had been led from the Indian Peninsula by the fame of Quisara's beauty.

To these there is now, at the opening of our story, to be added the cunning and cruel chief himself who had committed the late outrage, and who boldly presented himself at the Court of Tidore, in the character of a third suitor to

the Princess;—having first duly secured his personal safety, by negotiating with her, in her character of sovereign, for the delivering up her captive brother, on certain conditions to be named by him on his arrival; and which conditions now proved to be those of a marriage union between himself and the Princess.

But besides the three suitors above-mentioned, there was a fourth, a noble Portuguese soldier, named Ruy Dias, who, though he loved the lady at least as well and worthily as either of her other suitors, and was, moreover, so far as she had hitherto disclosed her feelings and purposes, looked upon by her with a not less favourable eye than his more high-born rivals, had not hitherto dared to rank himself among the avowed suitors of Quisara.

There were many reasons for this,—among which his deep-rooted and reverential love was the most powerful: for Ruy Dias perpetually felt that Quisara was as much above him in all things else, as she was in mere station. Besides

which, though still in the prime of life, Ruy Dias was several years older than the Princess. And though, as chief military commander of the Portuguese settlement, his occasions of intercourse with her were as frequent as he desired, he had never yet permitted himself even to guess, much less had endeavoured to satisfy himself, as to the state of her feelings towards him. In truth, his love, though settled in his heart, and absorbing all other sentiments there, had never yet dared to show itself in a definite form, even to himself; it seemed to wait for some accidental and outward occasion of disclosing and developing itself. That occasion was at hand.

A few days after the arrival at Tidore of the Governor of Ternata, (the island in which the King of Tidore was held prisoner,) Quisara had procured a slight entertainment to be given at the dwelling of a relative, at which the only stranger invited to be present was Ruy Dias; and before the entertainment was concluded,

she desired her friend and the attendants to leave them, as she wished to converse for a short time on matters of moment with the Portuguese.

As soon as they were, in this unusual and (to Ruy Dias) unlooked-for manner, left alone together, Quisara observed that the countenance of the Portuguese underwent a sudden change, and that, from having been conversing with her and her friend with an air of pleased freedom, he became instantly silent.

She waited for a few moments, and then addressed him, with that frankness of manner which was habitual to her, but with a certain lurking softness of tone and expression, which he had never before observed her to use towards him.

"Why how is this, Ruy Dias?" said she, looking at him fixedly. "A man-at-arms, and daunted by a lady! Soldiers, you know, are privileged to talk with Princes. Come—speak to me—for I have long seen that you desired,

ζ.

'yet delayed to do so—and it was for that I sought the present occasion."

"Madam," said Ruy Dias, surprised, and in some degree embarrassed, by this address, the object of which he could by no means divine — Madam, it is the favours you and your noble brother have ever cast upon me—so high above my poor merits—it is these that strike me mute, when I find myself alone in your presence."

Then, as he continued to gaze upon her, and to observe the look of sweet favour with which she seemed to meet and entertain his ardent gaze, a sudden thought came to him, which presently changed into a new hope; and, as he gazed on, his heart grew bold within him, and seemed to urge him onward, whether he would or no, to the disclosure of its long-cherished, though hitherto scarcely self-acknow-ledged desires.

Meantime, the lady,—as if, by the instinct of love, she could feel what was passing

within him,—remained silent; and Ruy Dias resumed somewhat abruptly.

"Speak to you, Lady!—what should I say, but call you my most royal mistress—the centre whence proceeds the life by which I live—the saint of my devotions—the fair altar where my first hopes of heaven were lighted, and where my last shall linger and expire—the rich ocean whence my star of honour rose, and where it sets—the bright sun that seems to gild and glorify, while it consumes me!"

Here he paused, and felt abashed at his own boldness; and still more so when he seemed to recollect how little the rhapsody he had just uttered was in unison with the calm sweetness and self-possessing gravity of the person he was addressing.

Quisara smiled a little at the disconcerted air which followed this feeling in Ruy Dias; but she said nothing; and after another pause, he went on, but in a different strain.

"Oh, could our wishes work!—then would

Ruy Dias be a mighty king, and so command affection. And yet, not so—I had rather serve than sway—rather sue than command—if servitude and suing might avail."

"Why now you talk indeed, Ruy Dias,"—said Quisara, "but yet in riddles. Avail?—for what?"

"To lift my hopes," exclaimed he passionately, "from the ground to which they grow, and place them on that pinnacle of glory where they could scarcely know themselves! I dare not speak or wish, unless it be that Quisara were less beautiful than she is, and not a Princess."

"This is not like Ruy Dias," said Quisara, with a soft yet serious expresssion. "He used to speak to me plainly, like a soldier and a friend. Then why not now?—And why would he have me no Princess?"

"Lady, I dare not speak," said he; "and if I dared, I could not."

"Then," said she, with an air of clear

can, and dare. You wish me other than I am, that you might hope to wed me?—Is it not so?—Nay, do not look down abashed. Is it not so?—And you would love me then?"

"Dearer than my soul!" exclaimed Ruy Dias, starting passionately, and lifting his eyes upward, as if to adjure Heaven to witness what he uttered. He was then silent again; and Quisara continued, in the same calm tone and self-possessed manner as before.

"I was fain to know this," said she, "and therefore I sought this interview. Now hear me. I love you—"

Ruy Dias started from the abstracted attitude into which he had relapsed, and lifting his eyes from the ground, gazed upon her in speechless wonder.

"Nay—hear what I would say—not my words only—I love you, Ruy Dias, as much above those suitors who surround me, as you

are above them in all the qualities that should make up a man. You are valiant, generous, noble, modest. These I love; and for these I love you. Do not mistake me",—continued she, seeing that he looked upon her with eyes' filled with a wondering joy—"I see these in you; but I would also see them in their outward forms—that all the world might see and know them also—else were my love an empty doting, unworthy both of us. Besides—that which I see in you, I feel within myself-only my woman's weakness will not let me put it into act: and virtues are but names, when we but feel them. The man that I would make lord of my heart and person, must be as much above myself, as noble actions are above noble thoughts. Think then, Ruy Dias, what may be done to win me—for something must something both great and difficult—something worthy, not me, but yourself. Do some such thing, and I may --- "

"Command me, Lady," exclaimed he

fervently, and starting to his feet—" and if the act should peril my life and soul, I will attempt it."

"Nay," replied she," you are too sudden. The act that is to win Quisara must be no rash one, springing from an empty valour, that lives but in itself. It must be not only brave, but worthy; not only glorious, but great; as noble for its wisdom as its valour. Know you of no such act?"

Here she paused, as if to give him an opportunity of replying—which he did, by vehement, but vague and general protestations of devotion to her service.

"Well," said she, "I will not doubt you. But it is your noble nature that I trust in—not your words. Come, let us now seek our friends, and talk of lighter matters. But first let me tell you, that I give public audience tomorrow to my general suitors; and that then, perhaps, something may chance, pointing at what we have spoken of. Come," she added,

seeing an abstracted air come over him—

"be not sad, Ruy Dias: have I not said how

much above them all I hold you?"

She then led the way to her friends.

CHAPTER II.

WE shall not inquire what thoughts passed through the mind of Ruy Dias, in consequence of this interview, nor guess at the motives of Quisara in bringing it about; but pass at once to the public reception of the Princess's suitors, which was to take place the next day, and at which it was expected she would give some distinct intimation of her views and feelings, touching the pretensions of those who so earnestly sought her favour.

The hour of audience arrived; and the hall of Quisara's palace was decked for the occasion, in all the barbaric pomp which became her station, as present sovereign of the land; and by his followers, and each scarcely permitting the place in which they met to prevent him from flinging a personal defiance in the face of the others, but that all knew this would be the surest way to lose the favour of the Princess.

Besides the three suitors and their followers, the hall was open to all those natives and strangers in the island, whose station entitled them to visit the Court. It was thronged, therefore, in every part; and among other foreigners who were present through curiosity, there was a young and noble Portuguese, named Armusia, who was newly arrived on the island, and having already heard much of Quisara's beauty, as well as of her extraordinary prudence and wisdom in administering the government during her brother's enforced absence, had sought this opportunity of seeing, and if occasion served, of paying his respects to her.

At length Quisara entered the hall, accom-

panied by a female relative who was scarcely ever absent from her, and followed by Ruy Dias,—who, in virtue of his station in the island, had been permitted to join her train in the antichamber.

It is not necessary to our purpose to describe the effects which Quisara's presence produced upon the various groups forming the splendid throng which filled the hall of audience. It is sufficient to say that (as the custom was) all greeted her entrance with shouts of admiring applause—all, except the young stranger, Armusia, who seemed struck into a wondering and speechless joy at the sight of her, and who for some time stood gazing silently upon her, as if unconscious of the presence of any other object, and unweeting even of that, except through the medium of his sight alone.

When Quisara had seated herself at the upper end of the hall, and the loud greetings caused by her entrance had subsided, a silence seemed gradually to steal over the whole

assembly, till presently all was hushed into a dead stillness: for the object of the meeting was known to all, and all waited in the most eager anxiety for its result.

At length Quisara rose from her seat; the silence became more breathless than before, and after a brief pause, she spoke as follows:—

"The Princes who honour Quisara by coming hither as her suitors, are now to learn which among them, if either, may look to win her.
—She knows not this herself—only how she may be won. Let, then, those who would win her, listen. It is as a Princess of this island that Quisara is wooed; and as a Princess of this island she must be won,—not as a mere woman. She neither knows nor seeks to distinguish between the merits of her suitors; and she thinks not of her own. She lives but in the love of her brother's people; and those who would serve and win her must do it through them. She asks not for duty or observance: these she has from those who owe it to her, and

What she asks is this—that he whom she is to love and wed be one, nobler than herself, in the power of doing what she can only think—one who can serve the people of this land as she can only will and wish to serve them: else, why should she wed? Let those who hear her, think of this, and of a deed that answers to it: and he who does that deed, whether a suitor now, or not, is Quisara's lord and husband, if he so wills."

She paused for a moment; but all remaining intently silent, she continued:—

"It must be a deed, wise, bold, difficult, dangerous, and nobly performed. Does no one present think of such a deed?"

She paused again, and cast her eyes loftily round the hall, till at length they rested upon Ruy Dias, who was listening with deep attention to her words. But she saw in him no signs by which she could judge that his thoughts were occupied as she would have had them;

and as she saw this, her lip fell for an install.

In the next, her face resumed its lofty conpowere, and she stood silent, as if waiting for
a reply to her words.

None came; only a busy which the thing the hall, which was prescribly hundred again, as if asking for her further speech. She passed for a few moments longer, and then resumed:—

"I would fain have had my wishes felt, rather than have spoken them. I thought that those who loved us could look into our hearts."

As she said this, she half-turned, as if unconsciously, to the spot where Ruy Dias was standing; but she did not look at him.

"Since it is not so," she continued, "briefly let me say, the deed that can alone win Quisara, is the redeeming from the bonds of yonder crafty and bad man, her royal brother—him who should sit where she does now—the beloved Prince of this beautiful land, but

in whose absence all its beauties speak but of grief. This were an action worthy to win the sister of that Prince; and he who does it may claim her for his bride. She will be his alone. I swear it by my royal name and word."

So saying, Quisara immediately turned, and was about to quit the hall; but her retirement was arrested by the Chief of Ternata, who approached her with a show of great humility and respect, and addressed her thus:—

"I take you at your royal word, Lady. I, and none but I, can perform the deed you have enjoined: and I will perform it, on the condition you have named. Be my bride—and your royal brother is free, and is my friend."

Quisara looked upon him, as he spoke, with all the scorn that her soft features could carry; and when he paused, she replied—

"I said, the deed that was to win me must be one, bold, dangerous, difficult, and nobly performed. Can such a deed come from such a source? And if it could, were this such a deed in you? I scorn you and your proffer—as my noble brother would scorn me, if I were to buy his freedom at such a price. Go—quit this island instantly—while you are safe."

And she once more turned, and quitted the hall,—not without looking stedfastly at Ruy Dias as she passed him, and feeling a sadness come over her, as doubts grew within her, no less as to the strength of his love, than of those qualities and sentiments from which she had hoped that it sprang.

The hall was presently cleared, and the suitors and others departed, without giving any open indications, by their words or conduct, as to how their hopes and views were affected by the result of the audience:—only it was observed that an earnest conference took place between the young stranger, Armusia, and his friends,—who lingered in the hall for a few minutes after the rest, and then quitted it suddenly, with looks of eager meaning upon their faces. It was observed, too, that in the course

of the same day, both they and the Chief of Ternata quitted the island.

CHAPTER III.

During the next two days Quisara did not quit her private apartments. But solitude brought with it different feelings and images from those it had of late been wont to engender. While she was communing with the world, all her thoughts were given to the unhappy condition of her brother, and to the welfare of those whom his captivity had placed beneath her rule. But when she retired from the busy scenes into which her daily duties carried her, it had of late seemed like retiring into the sanctuary of her own heart, to worship there the beautiful image of valour and virtue which her fond imagination had set up, under the noble form of Ruy Dias—whom she had long observed to be immeasurably superior, in knowledge, at

least, and in its attendant graces and refinements, to the comparatively uncultivated natives of her own island; and she had begun to look upon him as a being sent by Heaven to fill the void, and satisfy the yearnings, that she had long felt within her heart. When she found, too, (as she thought,) that he loved her, these feelings towards Ruy Diss had increased, from her no longer thinking it needful to check or controll them; and they had confirmed and hastened her in the project, of trying which of her suitors was most worthy of her, and at the same time gaining an occasion of dismissing the rest;—not doubting for an instant as to which among them would first and best prove his title to her favour.

But the result of Quisara's trial had no less perplexed and saddened, than it had surprised ther. When, indeed, she had talked vaguely to they Dias, of winning her favour by doing something to deserve it, he had fired at her words, and the first ardour of youthful blood could not

But when those words pointed to a definite and, and there was little to imagine and much to perform, his ardour seemed to cool, and his heart to close up, like a night-flower when the light comes to it.

All the native brightness of Quisara's mind, and the untaught wisdom of her heart, could not explain this to her; and she could only attribute it to the weakness of Ruy Dias's love, and lament over the failure of her hopes accordingly. But she lamented only with that smeet composure with which she would have enjoyed had it been otherwise; for her instinctive feeling of what was due to herself had prevented her from yielding up the entire controls over the treasures of her heart, till she was fully assured that she was not casting them sway.

As to Ruy Dies himself,—we have said that his love towards Quisars had hitherto remained shot up within his own breast, waiting for some

outward occasion of showing and diffusing itself. But when that occasion arrived, (as it now had,) he began to perceive, for he was a shrewd and clear-sighted man, and could look even into his own heart when anything questionable in its operations impelled him to do so -that the love of early youth, and the love of staid maturity, are as different in their nature as are the complexions, the thoughts, or the hopes of those two periods. That Ruy Dias loved Quisara with a pure and deep-rooted love, became more evident to him the more he examined and questioned his sentiments respecting her. But that he was able to question and examine those sentiments, proved to him that the roots of his love were fixed in his reason and his understanding, not in his heart, and that its nourishment was drawn from his imagination, not his blood. In short, his love was essentially contemplative; and when now for the first time called upon to act, it first asserted its true character.

words of Quisara, at the public audience, at first stirred and warmed Ruy Dias; then elevated and inspired him; and, until they pointed to a definite act, there was, he thought, nothing that he could not perform, to prove the strength of his love for her. But when one thing, and one alone, was to be done, then his calculating reason came into play, and he began to think upon the proposed task, and to balance against each other, the means of doing it, and the opposing difficulties; and his love stood aloof, and took no part in the conference.

Such is not the love that lifts men into heroes; and they who possess it are happy if, when opposed, it does not lead them into crime. We shall presently see what it did for Ruy Dias.

On the evening of the second day after that on which Quisara had given public audience to her suitors, Ruy Dias solicited an interview with her: for he had grown alarmed at her unusual seclusion; and, moreover, having seriously considered of the project for the release of the King, he wished to communicate with her upon it.

She received him with a clouded brow, closed lips, and an air of sad yet tender reproach; all of which denoted what had been the cause of her seclusion, and what the kind of thoughts by which it had been occupied. Still she treated him with her usual frankness, and with no sign of anger.

"This is not as I thought or hoped, Ruy Dias," said she. "I thought it was the noble nature of you Portugals to do—not talk of doing."

"Dearest Lady," exclaimed he, interrupting her;—but she stayed his words with a motion of her head and hand.

"Nay," continued she, "when you first told me of your love, (led so to do by me—I confess it,) your words were made of fire. It was this that moved me to set the price I did upon the rescue of my royal brother: for I knew that, had the courage even to essay the act, much less the prudence and the wisdom to achieve it. I thought your words were deeds, only not yet done. I was deceived, Ruy Dias: I find you cold and cautious. Eager to have my love, I doubt not, but slow to win it. Nay," continued she, seeing he was about to speak—"I do not say that you have lost it—but——"

Lady," said he, roused by these last words, so as to be no longer able to restrain himself from interrupting her—" Lady—I have been to blame; your reproaches—for they are just—strike shame into me. Something shall be done, and speedily—at least attempted. But we must be cautious—for the act is perilous—and—"

"Prudence is good, Ruy Dias," interrupted Quisara, "but when the act is great and pressing, beware of it. It was not prudence, but an insolent boldness, that lost us my royal

brother. Think whether the same might not regain him."

At this instant a great shout was heard, as if coming from the sea-shore; and as Quisara and Ruy Dias paused to listen, it seemed to approach, and gather strength as it neared them. They listened anxiously—they scarce knew why—as if they had an instinctive feeling that both were deeply interested in the cause. Still it kept rolling onward towards the spot where they stood, and gathering an awful strength as it drew nigh.

The sound was a joyful one; and it seemed to come from the collected voices of the whole people.

At length an attendant burst unceremoniously into the apartment where Quisara and Ruy Dias were conferring, and exclaimed, in breathless haste,—

"The King!—The King, madam, is returned!"

These words fixed Ruy Dias motionless to the spot where he was standing.

Their effect on Quisara was different. At first, a rush of joy came upon her heart, and with uplifted arms, eager lips, and eyes sparkling with a new fire, she was rushing forward, forgetful of everything but the unexpected joy that awaited her, in the sight of her beloved brother. But suddenly she stopped—a look of sadness passed into her face,—the moment before beaming with delight; and she turned to Ruy Dias:——

"This should have been your work, Ruy Dias," said she,—"but prudence—"

Then checking herself, she seemed to will back into her face and heart the sparkling joy that a momentary thought had driven away.

"Come!" said she, "let us not cloud the brightness of these happy tidings, by thinking in what they might have been happier. Come!" And she hastily quitted the apartment,—beckoning Ruy Dias to follow her.

It should now be related, briefly, (for the details are not material to the object of our stary,) that the young Amausia, who has been described as so struck with silent wonder and admiration at the first sight of Quisara, no sooner heard the announcement of her determination, as to the price which could alone purchase her love, than he instantly bethought him of how the act might at least be attempted; and, with all the burning ardour of youth, and the promptitude inspired by a new passion, he had already taken measures towards its accomplishment, while the avowed suitors of Quisara were pondering upon its impossibility.

By his eloquent representations, added to the love that they all bore him, Armusia engaged three of his companions to assist him in his enterprise. They immediately, within an hour or two of the audience, left the island in a small boat they provided for the purpose; reached Ternata the same day; and

established themselves in a storehouse adjoining to the prison where the King was confined. They made arrangements and preparations, in the course of the next day, for the blow which they proposed to strike; and before day-break on the following morning the storehouse and prison were in flames—the doors of the latter were burst open—the guards surprised and overcome—the King rescued, and on the sea in their little boat;—and behold him now, approaching triumphantly to his own palace gates, amid the joyful shouts of his people; but hearing and heeding them less than the still deep voice that was singing grateful hymns within his heart, to the noble deliverer who walked modestly and thoughtfully by his side!

The multitude whose shouts had called Quissara forth from her conference with Ruy Dias, reached the palace gates as she was about to leave them, and on the threshold of their own dwelling the brother and sister once more met, and were pressed in each other's arms.

When the King had embraced his sister, and vented his first feelings of joy at the sight of her, he turned towards Armusia, (who had retired to some distance at the approach of Quisara,) and motioning him forward, took him by the hand, and presented him to her.

"You, no doubt, know this noble youth," said he, "to whose skill and valour we owe it that we now see each other—that your brother once more rejoices in his freedom—that this people again receive and hail their King. Greet him, my sweet sister, as his great act deserves."

During these words Quisara's heart sank within her; for in her anxious joy at the King's freedom, she had not for an instant thought of how or by whom it had been accomplished; except that a vague feeling had passed through her mind, that no doubt it had been brought about by some plan or proceeding of her brother himself: for she knew that, except the Chief of Ternata, no one of her

avowed suitors had left the island since she had given audience to them. But now, indistinct fears came upon her. She thought of the promise she had publicly made at the audience; of him from her confidence in whose love she had made it; and looking round hurriedly, as if in search of some one, and not finding what she sought, she flung herself once more upon the neck of her brother; and almost without noticing the humble yet ardent looks of Armusia, she seemed to take refuge, in a new burst of joy, from the contending feelings that assailed her.

END OF VOLUME ?.

London Printed by HARRISON AND Co., St. Martin' Lane.



CHATSWORTH;

OR,

THE ROMANCE OF A WEEK.

RDITED BY THE

AUTHOR OF "TREMAINE," "DE VERE," &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1844.

Lundur. Habribon and Co., Phinibbs, St. Mariin's Lane.

CHATSWORTH.

LOVE CURED BY LOVE,

CONTINUED.

CHAPTER IV.

LOVE can debase the mind, as well as raise it; it can soil the soul, as well as purify it; else, with all its power and beauty, it were not a human passion, and therefore not a theme for human sympathy. But it sometimes debases, only to lift to a loftier height than before; it sometimes tries and tortures, only to regenerate and refine. Always it works only on the materials that it finds; neither destroying nor creating.

The King had no sooner dismissed from his mind those first natural emotions which would not be denied their momentary way, on seeing all that was dear to him once more about him, than up to maturity within his heart, he desi know what the views of the young Porti were in visiting the island, and how he epay some portion of the debt of gratitue for his late noble deliverance.

"I do not bid you let me repay it all, he, "for I feel it press upon me with a pleasure, that I do not wish away. And if I would be quit of it, I cannot. You given me more than life and freedom; sin giving me these, you have given me bac power to use them as alone I would—in me those who love and serve me happy. Say, what I can do to do you good; and it power can compass it, think it already done

Roth Ruy Dies and Ouissus

a repressed impatience, the reply of Armusia. Yet both seemed anxious that nothing like an interchange of intelligence should be observed between them.

"Your thanks, Sir," said Armusia, after a pause,—during which he looked humbly towards Quisara, whose eyes for the first time met his, and made them drop suddenly to the ground, as if in voluntary self-abasement,—"Your thanks, Sir, should be paid to her who enjoined the act, and, in so doing, gave the power to perform it. The Princess," continued he, turning to Quisara again, "willed your deliverance; and in naming its price, assured it. I almost fear to think upon that price. I dare not name it, it is so far beyond the merit of the act."

"What is this, Quisara?" said the King, eagerly, and with an earnest joy looking forth from his gentle countenance. "Name the recompense that I should pay this more than friend and brother; name it; and though it cannot give requital, it may ease the weight of

gratitude that grows upon me every moment while I think of it."

Quisara spoke not,—but the flush that came upon her cheek as the king turned to her, faded into a sick paleness, and her lip trembled. Yet not the less she looked upon Armusia with a cold regard, in which there was something of haughty inquiry intermixed.

"Silent, my sister!" continued the King, when he found that she did not reply,—"silent, when the theme is gratitude for the deliverance of a dear brother from worse than death!—How is this?—and when (as this noble youth avouches) it was yourself who urged the act, and named its price!"

Quisara was still silent; and the King, turning to Armusia, continued,—

"I beseech you speak, Sir. What is it your words point at?"

Finding that all remained silent, Armusia at length replied:—

"I must not, cannot speak, Sir, what you

demand to hear, unless in the words in which I heard it: for they still ring in my ears, and have done since I heard them, and watched the lips that uttered them. Nay, their living echoes left not my heart, amid the cries of blood and battle that assailed me as we burst your prison doors this morning,—nor fled even at the shouts of joy that welcomed your return."

Then, after a momentary pause, he continued, in a more slow and solemn tone, and in Quisara's own words:—

"The deed that can alone win Quisara, is the redeeming, from the bonds of yonder crafty and bad man, her Royal Brother. This were an action worthy to win the sister of that prince; and he who does it, may claim her for his bride. She shall be his alone. I swear it by my royal name and word!"

The King's face beamed with delight as Armusia spoke; and when he ceased, exclaimed,—
"Ah! and is it so? This were indeed a

payment of our great debt, Quisara-making us

all the richer by the outlay.—Why did I not think of this?—But you are silent, my sister! And were those indeed your words, Quisara?" continued he fondly. "What a sweet lightening of my weight of gratitude is this, to find it thus divided! Yet would I fain pay it all to each."

The King was growing garrulous in his pleasure; but his happy thoughts were checked, on looking at Quisara, whose eyes were on the ground, while an uncertain expression overspread her features, which he could not interpret. As the King ceased suddenly from speaking, and looked inquiringly at Quisara, she spoke.

- "Those were indeed my words. I cannot forget them."
- "Cannot?" interrupted the King, quickly; and would you, then?"
- "Spare me, my brother!" resumed she,—approaching him with renewed looks of fondness and joy,—"spare me! I own the gratitude we owe this youth,—and that my word is passed to pay it as he says. But we are strangers to each

other. I never saw him till now. Besides,—my joy at your return stifles all other thoughts. We must have feasts and revelry—and then—"

- "Nay, Quisara," interrupted the King, "this is no case for coy delays and humble wooings; nor were they worthy either you, Quisara, or him who claims you."
- "Pardon me, Sir!" said Armusia; "I do not claim the Princess; nor would I have her think my humble love dares even hope to gain her grace and favour, without that service and observance which it will be my duty and delight to pay, and which (wanting the adventitious merit that my happy fortune has this day given me) I had not dared presume even to offer."
- "Well, well," interrupted the King, "I see how it is. But let us separate now, and entertain our several thoughts in private. To-morrow we will talk of this again."

Then, amidst the movement occasioned by the King's motion to retire, he turned to Armusia, and said, in an under tone, in which there was a grave joy mixed—

"She is yours, Armusia; fear it not;—she is your own!"

He then retired to his private apartments; while Quisara, turning also towards hers, stopped for a moment beside Ruy Dias, and looking at him through her half-veiled eye-lids, said, with a sad, desponding head-shake,—

"Ah! this was your prudence,—your slothful prudence, Ruy Dias."

And so the assembly separated, betaking themselves severally to the privacy of their own thoughts.

Two only must we for the present follow thither,—Quisara and Ruy Dias; and if we find those thoughts, and the emotions that grew therefrom, other than in our passionless abstraction we would have them, let us strive to pity and uphold, not despise and contemn, our common Nature.

CHAPTER V.

When Quisara was alone, she now for the first time discovered the new secret of her heart. Not the secret that she loved Ruy Dias; for that the frank nobleness of her nature had never permitted her to think of concealing, even from him, much less from herself, while she deemed him one whom to love was a virtue, even in her, a princess. The secret that she discovered was, that her love, born of goodness, and rooted in admiration, had attained a self-sufficing strength, which would not let it die, even now that its spring and nourishment were taken from it. She felt that Ruy Dias was not that for which she had loved him; and she grieved for it, in the depths of her heart.

But she selt that, whatever he was, she loved him still; and this at first grieved her still more.

But there can be no long-continued contention in the human heart; least of all in such a gentle heart as Quisara's, whose sole instinct it was to love, and seel itself beloved. In such a heart gentleness soon triumphs over all, and by its sweet alchemy, converts all opposites to its own hue and character. For a brief while Quisara sighed over her misplaced affection, and felt ashamed of the weakness which prevented her from flinging it off. Then, doubts, and fears, and feminine sophistications, came to the aid of her love, and made it see with their eyes, and speak with their tongues. Then it grew bolder, by the very efforts which its threatened power compelled it to put forth. And at last it rose triumphant over the adverse feelings that assailed it—scattering some into air, as if they had never been, and binding down others to do its will and bidding. In a word, Quisara loved Ruy Dias the more, the more she felt that he was not that for which

she had at first loved him; and the more inherently weak the bonds grew which held her, the more strong they became in her weakness, both of power and of will, to break them.

But was Quisara happy in her love of to-day, as she had been in that of yesterday? And did she yearn to tell it, not only to him who was its object, but to all the world? Alas! no. It pressed upon her heart like a weight—almost of guilt. It filled her fancy with dim forebodings, and threw sadness into her face, and silenced her late joyful voice, and drew her eyes to the ground, as if they dared not show the secrets that were in them.

As for Ruy Dias—his love, while it was not positively opposed by circumstances, had gone on purifying and strengthening his spirit, and lifting his thoughts to a height which they had never reached before, and where,—all things being propitious to his hopes,—they might, perhaps, have maintained themselves. But when, in the very face of his returned affection,

through his heart, but which now he first mitted—then entertained—and, at last, lo about him deliberately for the means of pu into act.

Let not those who do not feel the possibilithis so sudden change, the less believe it. them remember that our human nature is an instrument, more or less weak to resis will of the circumstances that play upon And, moreover, let them not forget that Dias had reached that period of life who our other passions—even love itself, the obedient of all—yields itself up to the youthat self-love which is the earliest-born and latest-lived of them all, and sooner or late duces them all to its will.

from place to place, with a black melancholy clouding his looks, which every now and then seemed to be dispersed for a moment, by thoughts which came to him as if against his will, and made him stop, and start, and question himself inwardly, and then hurry forward as if he would escape from some unseen trouble.

There was a young Portuguese soldier, named Piniero, a nephew of Ruy Dias, who had been brought to the island by the latter, and placed in a command in the garrison. This young man was of a quick and shrewd wit. But though occasionally carried away by this, and by the fine flow of animal spirits which belonged to his time of life, he was of a noble and sted-fast nature, unbounded in his admiration of goodness, even though it were of a kind which he himself could not pretend or hope to reach; and he was not to be moved to admit even a thought of baseness.

Piniero had not failed to observe the new condition of his uncle, Ruy Dias, (whom he

nity of learning its cause; when, as if by accident—though each was in fact seeking to encounter the other—they met. Piniero, it should be said, was not without shrewd suspicions as to the nature of his uncle's sentiments towards Quisara; and therefore did not fail to suspect that the King's return, and the consequent pretensions of Armusia, were mixed with the new feelings which had of late taken possession of Ruy Dias.

"Good morrow, Sir," said Piniero, when they met.

"Nephew," said Ruy Dias, "I would speak with you." He paused a moment, and then went on: "You know how I love you, Piniero; how long I have loved you; what I have done for you; how I bred you (wanting a father) with a father's care and tenderness."

"He talks," thought Piniero, "as if he was going to ask a boon of me."

"The station in which I have put you,"

continued Ruy Dias, "is no mean one. It is next to myself in honour and reward. These are testimonies that I have not forgotten you." Then looking at him steadfastly for a moment, he added, "In return, I would not be forgotten by you Piniero—I hope I am not."

"What does this point at, Sir?" said Piniero, seriously—impressed by his uncle's manner, more than by his words. "Have I forgotten you?—or is my nature such, to make you fear I should?"

"Oh Piniero!" sighed forth Ruy Dias; and the thoughts out of which his words grew seemed to shake his heart as he uttered them,— "Oh, my dear nephew!"

"What is it that oppresses and disturbs you, Sir?" said Piniero, as his uncle paused.—"I have observed that you are not yourself; that your clear brow is clouded; your firm gait troubled; your thoughts travelling abroad for food that they should find at home. Could I know the cause of these, I might help to alter or defeat it."

"You can, you can," interrupted Ruy Dias suddenly, and with a vehement anxiety in his manner, which seemed to shoot light into the mind of Piniero, as to the theme of his thoughts; and he waited for his uncle to proceed. Ruy Dias suddenly stopped, and his thoughts seemed to fall back upon themselves abashed.

"Oh, my best nephew," continued he, after a brief pause, his voice assuming a mournful expression—"the Princess!"

He again paused; and Piniero said,—"You love her, Sir—is it not so? And you would fain have done the deed yourself—(it was a noble one!) that is to gain her?"

"That is to gain her?" echoed Ruy Dias, while a tumultuous expression of passion agitated his countenance. "She is mine, Piniero!—she loves me—and but for that Armusia—"

"Ha!" thought Piniero; and a flush of indignant regret passed across his face—"is it so?"

"But for that stranger," continued Ruy

Dias, after a momentary pause—"that blighter of my hopes—that blotter-out of my honour."

- "Aye," thought Piniero again, "now it comes flowing from him gaily! I feared as much—I thought that he who dared leave undone, when love and honour urged him to be doing, dared to do evil when his ends asked for it."
- "But he has done a brave thing, uncle," said Piniero aloud; "a noble one, and—"
- "He has done a thing, nephew," interrupted Ruy Dias, "which undoes me—which strikes me to the earth—which treads me (like a name written in sand) to nothing—which hangs, like a prodigious cloud, between me and my light, and buries me in darkness."

Then, after a brief pause, and recovering the self-possession which his vehemence had driven away, he added, looking at Piniero steadfastly:

"And if I am nothing, Piniero, what will you be? Were not this worth considering?"

Piniero's quick thoughts pierced his uncle's vol. 11.

design, and his course was taken on the instant, and without a single self-questioning or hesitation. Returning his uncle's steadfast look, he said.

"It is worth considering—and, to be sudden and to the purpose, as friends should—say that this Armusia were removed—(as may be easily done—) how stands the Princess?"

"Oh, she is mine for ever," interrupted Ruy Dias, eagerly; "she contemns him and his deed."

"But would she countenance his taking off?" asked Piniero. "She has a high and honourable fame. True, she loves, you say—and love is no over-nice casuist. Briefly, uncle; give me access to the lady; and if I find her not averse to this enterprize, I may find the means of compassing it. Besides,—you know the power of a bright lady's eyes upon me. They have often made a fool of me before now; it were hard indeed, then, if they and gratitude together cannot for once make a simple villain of me!"

"Why this is more than I had hoped," said Ruy Dias; and he drew from his breast a letter, addressed to the Princess, which he had prepared before hand, in case his nephew should fall in with his views—"this is as it should be. I had almost feared some boyish scruples, bred of a soft heart and a thoughtless head, might have marred my hopes. But I find you wiser than I thought."

"You will find me wiser than you think, good uncle,"—said Piniero to himself.

"Here—take this letter," continued Ruy Dias. "This will make your way to the Princess's private ear, and let her know the purport of your errand. You will find her all that we could wish. She loves me, Piniero,—and where love is, all things else must bow and yield before it. Farewell!—I know your prudence and discretion, when you choose to exercise them—and I trust my hopes to them. When you have seen the Princess, come to me again. Remember—I trust to you."

"Lucky you do trust to me, good uncle," said Piniero to himself, as Ruy Dias left him-"for when you trust yourself, you trust a knave, I see. So," continued he, as he proceeded on his errand—"this, then, is the noble Portuguese —the brave, the generous, the just Ruy Dias! A special piece of divinity this love must be! Besides his other merits, (some of which I knew before,) he can metamorphose an honest man into a villain, in the twinkling of a lady's eye! That is, provided (like my good uncle, here) he has lived long enough in the world to learn differences and distinctions. But can the lady know of this? can she (still so young) have taken the Devil's degree in Love's college? I think not. And yet she is a Princess, and therefore should have her will—and moreover, she i a woman, and therefore will have it. But can it be her will, to take this same honourable uncle of mine, merely for his smooth tongue, and his fair, albeit somewhat faded presence, and leave a braver and a better man—as much better

as, in Love's arithmetic, twenty-five is more than forty—and one who has nobly won, and would proudly and fondly wear her? There's no saying. She loves him, he says: and as it has pleased Love to make a knave of him, it were but fair in his divinityship to make a fool of her. Well-we shall see. But if ever I turn lover, (which beauty forbid!) I hope heaven, in its mercy, will incontinently help me to a halter, and the heart to use it—for I am but indifferently honest as it is; and love might chance to make a scoundrel of me!-Murder in cold blood! for to hear the lectures he has given me on the heat of mine, his blood must be as cold as Caucasus.—They say 'Love and Ambition draw the Devil's coach.' It must be my care (and it shall) to see that, in the present journey, they do not tumble the passengers over a precipice."



.

•

.

•

CHAPTER VI.

Such were the cogitations that passed through the mind, and indeed found their way to the frank lips, of the light-hearted Piniero, as he proceeded on his way to the Princess's palace. But as he approached it, his almost irrepressible gaiety of spirit once more gave place to that serious and steadfast thoughtfulness, which occasions like the present were capable of calling forth in him.

It was a dangerous and delicate office that he had taken upon him; and it would task all his wit and courage to carry himself safely under it: for he would fain save his uncle and the Princess from the sin and shame that seemed

to await them, but was still more strongly determined on turning aside the danger that threatened the noble Armusia. How he should effect both, or either, of these ends, must depend on the mood in which he should find Quisara, touching his uncle's project.

On reaching the palace, he solicited an interview, in the name of Ruy Dias, and was presently admitted. He found the Princess sad and thoughtful; but she received him graciously: and as he had the wit to judge women more by their looks than their words, he watched her with the strictest scrutiny, as she read the letter from his uncle, which he presented to her. Bu he could gather nothing positive from her looks. A momentary gleam of pleasure—not untinged by an added degree of sadness-passed across her face as she read the superscription, and opened the letter; and as she perused its contents, her cheek flushed, and then grew pale, and then flushed again: and he thought that the paper shook and rustled in her hand, as she held it. But he could make nothing out, from these signs, as to the temper in which she took his uncle's proposition for getting rid of the claims of Armusia;—for such he judged the purport of the letter to be.

When Quisara had read the first side of the paper, she turned the leaf over; and as Piniero's eye glanced for an instant from her face to her action, he perceived that the page was blank. Still, however, she kept her eyes steadfastly fixed upon it, as if reading; but there was no fluctuating emotion in her face; on the contrary, it gradually reacquired that self-possessed air which was usual to it,—but mixed with a sadness deeper than before, and almost taking the garb of severity. At length, she suddenly gathered the paper into her hand, and looked at Piniero keenly, for a moment. She then addressed him:—

[&]quot;Do you know the contents of this paper,
Sir?"

[&]quot;I guess them, Lady," said Piniero, with a

show of great respect and deference; "and the business that they point at."

- "Well, Sir?" resumed Quisara inquiringly,—but Piniero remained silent, and she continued:—
- "It is a business of no common moment—asking no mean care and skill, and bearing about it no slight danger. Am I to think that, in being the bringer of this letter, you dare undertake the act it points at?"
- "Think, Lady," replied Piniero, "that I dare do anything you would have done, and dare bid me do."
- "It is for me, then, you would do it—not your uncle?"
- "It were best not seek to know this. Suffice it, that if you wish it done, and sanction the doing——"
 - "I would fain," said she-
- "Have it done?" interrupted Piniero, catching hastily at her words; for it was the first glimpse she had given him by which he could

venture to judge with any certainty of her sentiments.

"Conceive it so," said Quisara.

Piniero's countenance flashed with a momentary indignation as she uttered the words, but it was as instantly repressed; and he waited to hear what further she would say.

"At present I would be alone," she continued. "I will think more of this. Do you so too—and come to me to-morrow. In the meantime, say to your uncle that I would see him here, to-night, upon the hour of ten—here, in my private ante-chamber. Bid him ask for Panura, my chief attendant, who will conduct him in."

Quisara then abruptly quitted the apartment; and as Piniero left the palace, he could not help communing with himself on the result of his interview; though his feelings in regard to it were not exactly the same as those which followed the disclosure of his uncle's views.

"This woman is cunning," thought he, as

he went, pondering on the course he should take; "she is cunning,—but she is bloody! She would but half disclose her wishes to me—perchance to herself; but she would compass them, nevertheless, spite of her oath and honour. Well—I must only the more shrewdly bear myself between them, to keep off some slave, fashioned and fleshed to what they wish, who might else step in, and act their thoughts, even before they have put them into wishes: for there be such, even among our boasted Portugals."

Then, resuming his ordinary vein, as his own free and honest thoughts came back upon him, he continued,—

"And this is Love's doing—Love, the immortal—Love, the pure—the purifier! Such, at least, our poets swear he is. I swear he is a knave—the greatest among the gods—which, (in reverence be it spoken!) is saying not a little. The veriest sinner that ever descended from Olympus, to teach us our duties! Well—only

let anybody, henceforth, call me a lover! A liar one may bear—from a friend!—but 'a lover' is high treason to any gentleman's honour, and should be forthwith laid down as the only case in which the duello is peremptory."



CHAPTER VII.

Turn we now for a while to Armusia. His noble and eager spirit was struck with a feeling of deep disappointment, when he found that his happy success, in the deliverance of the King, was not to be immediately followed up by that only consequence which he had looked for from it. This threw him at first into a sadness, which was increased by perceiving (as he soon did) the cause of his disappointment. The Princess was evidently predisposed in favour of another. He (Armusia) was not the person who should have done her high bidding, in restoring her brother to his throne and people.

Still Armusia could not persuade himself

that Quisara had conceived any deep or insurmountable sentiment towards another, or that
she would have lightly pledged her oath to an
act which a still more sacred feeling might prevent her from performing. From what he now
saw, it was evident to him that she had intended
her words (at the public audience of her suitors)
to arouse Ruy Dias alone to the performance of
the act they pointed at: thinking, as she did, that
he alone was worthy and capable of performing
it. But he persuaded himself, that now she had
found him wanting in that noble daring which
could alone deserve her entire affection, she might
cease to cherish that admiration of his character,
which could alone have won her favour.

In any case, Armusia was too young, and of too ardent a temper, to despair; and yet his love, though already a settled sentiment of his mind and heart, was of too delicate and pure a character to permit of his either hoping or wishing to see its views furthered by anything aside or apart from itself. He determined, therefore, on seeking an interview with Quisara, and letting his love plead its own cause with her; predetermining to controul it only in not permitting it to urge any claims but those which sprung out of itself: for he loved too purely and too wisely to feel that anything but love can give us claims to be beloved.

But in seeking this interview with Quisara, Armusia foresaw that he must take a prompt and a bold course—as he had done in the late enterprise; for his temper, no less than the strength of his love, made him disposed to be anything but a whining lover, or to sigh himself away in empty and unavailing sorrows. His love was as confident in its strength, as it was unpresuming in its humility; and, however adverse to his hopes Quisara might at present seem, he was not willing to abandon those hopes without giving them a fair chance of working out their own success. He therefore determined on (if possible) presenting himself before her under circumstances which should compel her to

at least see and judge of the nature of his suit, and not give her the choice of avoiding a comparison which, if her love for Ruy Dias was but in its infancy, he had at least no cause to fear.

Accordingly, Armusia used the means which his new position in the eyes of all gave him, of persuading Panura, the Princess's favourite attendant, to give him secret access to Quisara's antechamber, on the evening of the day which has just been referred to, in relating the interview between Quisara and Piniero: and behold him now, waiting there, in deep but self-possessed anxiety, the arrival of the Princess, previously to her retirement to rest for the night.

At last she entered the chamber alone, and more beautiful (he thought) in a certain soft halo of sadness which seemed to breathe around her, and emanate from all her form, as she moved slowly past where he stood unobserved, than when he had first beheld her, bright and beaming with a newly-awakened hope, at the thought

of her beloved brother's return; or, again, when that hope had merged in a passionate joy at its consummation. He gazed upon her for a moment in a speechless rapture, which seemed to steep his soul in a brief oblivion of all things but its sense of her beauty. Then, with a noble self-assurance, commanding all thoughts away from him but those which had led him to the bold and hazardous step he had taken, he immediately came forward, and presented himself before her.

On seeing him the Princess started, as if suddenly awakened from sleep; then, looking round her quickly, she seemed about to retire from the apartment. But, as if suddenly recollecting who and where she was, she drew herself up proudly where she stood, and casting upon Armusia a look of noble anger, addressed him thus:—

"What is this, Sir? How do I find you here?—and wherefore?—What strange audacity is this? Think you my brother's love and

favour will protect you in violating the sanctuary of his sister's chamber!"

"Lady!" exclaimed Armusia——

But she went on, as if without hearing him.

"Is it thus you show the humility of your love?—Is this the way you prove the duty you professed to me? Quit this place, instantly; I am mistress of myself, and will be so.—Leave me!"

"Lady," said Armusia, as she paused in her hurried speech, as if alarmed—"Lady, hear me calmly for a moment, and then I will obey you. Wrong not yourself by fears. The only peril of this meeting is to me, who have set my life and hopes upon the cast of it. Think if there is danger in my love, or if it is other than duteous and humble as you would have it, when it bids me say, that if you so will it, when I quit your gracious presence now, I will never enter it again. It is to prove my heart's humility, that I am here; it is to tax to the uttermost the duteous love I bear towards you—that, while it fills my heart

with fears, leaves it not hopeless till you bid it be so."

"What would you then?" said Quisara,—resuming in part, as Armusia spoke, the calm dignity and sweet repose of demeanour that were so finely correspondent with the character of her beauty—"and what should I think of finding you here, at this hour?"

"Think, Lady," replied Armusia, "that my love is dangerous only to myself, and that you are your own safety. Think that I come, only to complain once, and then be silent—nay, not to complain, but only to lament; only to grieve that your gracious bounty would seem to have forgotten, or to contemn, that which (I urge it not as a claim) you bad me do for you;—only a little to touch upon, not to accuse, the seeming scorn you put upon me;—only to remind you that it was by your commands I hoped to gain you, and therefore dared to love you;—only, in brief, to tell you that, (unworthy as I am) having once dared to love you,

I cannot love or wed any but you, or your memory."

As Armusia pronounced this speech,—which he did with an air of deep passion breathing through the fears which it expressed,—a look of grave pleasure gradually diffused itself over the features of Quisara; and when he ceased to speak, she said—

"This, Sir, is the way to beget the fair opinion I would fain have of you. I am ashamed of my fears, and see that they were vain. Let me say, too, that I confess your claims upon my gratitude, and respect the nobleness of your nature, that would set them at nought. But let me say, too——"

Then, suddenly pausing, she seemed to recollect something that she had till then forgotten. It cast a look of momentary confusion into her face; but the next instant she resumed her former calm demeanour, and added,—

"I should not doubt your truth, Sir,—nor do I: but we are strangers to each other. You profess a fair obedience to my wishes. I would fain put it to present trial."

"I ask no other, Lady. Say what I should do."

"Look for no further favours now," replied Quisara; "forget the services you have done me—the dangers you past through to them—even the reward that is (I confess it) due to them;—forget even your love itself; and, remembering only the duteous observance which you say it prompts in you, leave all to me, and quit this place instantly."

Armusia, after a brief pause, bowed his head low, in token of obedience, and turned to depart, without even raising his looks towards Quisara, or uttering a single word in reply.

At this instant the door of the apartment opened, and Ruy Dias entered.

All three stood for a few moments fixed in silence. At length Ruy Dias, looking with an air of proud astonishment, first on Armusia, and

then on Quisara, said,—without however directly addressing himself to either,—

"Where am I? Are these the apartments of the Princess Quisara. And is it thus I find her privacy occupied?"

Seeing Armusia about to reply, Quisara said to him, with an air of calm dignity,—

"I claim your promise, Sir. Speak not, but leave this place at once. We shall meet again."

Armusia again bowed his head, in token of implicit obedience; and departed without a word, or without even looking again on either Quisara or Ruy Dias.

The door of the apartment had scarcely closed upon Armusia, when Ruy Dias turned to Quisara, with looks of ill-suppressed rage upon his countenance, and exclaimed, in a quick, loud voice,—

"Is this the trust that I must build my hopes upon? Are these the proofs of your

respect and favour? Is this the banquet I was bid to?"

"Ruy Dias,—beware!" exclaimed Quisara, endeavouring to interrupt him: but he continued, with increasing vehemence,—

"How came he here? Did you invite him? Was he brought here to brave me?" Then, altering his angry tone to one expressive of sarcastic insinuation, he added, "Or is it I who am the intruder? Perchance I came unlooked for,—before the time that I was bid, or wanted! If so, your negligent attendant must answer for it—who was not in waiting to stay me till I was welcome!"

"Ruy Dias!" said Quisara, in a tone and with a look that struck him dumb at once, and made him crouch backward and shrink within himself, as he heard and felt them,—"Ruy Dias,—I find you as much too bold where you should be humble, as you were slow and cautious where boldness would have become you. Who am I, that you dare thus to task my

thoughts and actions? Was it for this I graced and honoured you?—graced and honoured one who is an open shame to me—since others can do for me what he scarce dares to think of?"

"I am to blame, Lady,"exclaimed Ruy Dias, with an air of deep humility.

"You are indeed, Sir," interrupted she, with a relenting sadness mixed with the dignified anger that marked her countenance and manner. Then resuming all her noble scorn, she went on — "Weak that I was, and blind!—nay, worse—ungrateful and unjust!—a sound—a shape—the mere sign of a soldier and a lover! To hang my lingering hopes on these,—and let the loyal substance of them—the reality—stand by ungraced and slighted!"

"Lady," exclaimed Ruy Dias, imploringly, and sinking on his knee before her as he spoke, "I have been too bold. Pity and forgive me!"

"I scorn thee, and contemn thee!" exclaimed she. Then, casting a look upon him, in which the feelings she had just expressed predominated, but in which there was mixed a lingering tenderness that seemed to stay there against her will, she passed by him where he knelt, and left the apartment without uttering another word.

Without venturing to inquire too curiously, as to what may have been the real views of Quisara, in regard to the proposition of Ruy Dias, made to her through Piniero, for getting rid of the claims of Armusia, we must here relate, that, instantly on her quitting the apartment, as we have above described, she despatched a messenger to Piniero, commanding him in the strongest terms to take no step in the business which had been the subject of their late conference, till she had again seen him, to consult further on the matter.



CHAPTER VIII.

WE must now once more turn our attention to the crafty savage from whose hands Armusia had been the means of so nobly redeeming the captive King of Tidore.

Baffled as his views had been, and hopeless as he was of again compassing them now that they were fully exposed and known, he at once determined to abandon them, and seek revenge instead. To this end he carefully disguised himself, under the garb and aspect of a venerable priest of the worship universally prevalent in those islands, and having found the means of privately landing at Tidore, he presented himself before the King, as one possessed of secret know-

ledge vital to the interests of religion and the state.

The King, who had always shown a deep reverence for the priestly office, immediately admitted the seeming stranger to a private conference; during which his noble and unsuspecting nature became the ready dupe of the deep cunning which was opposed to it. The seeming priest, having first gained the King's confidence, by working on his piety towards the gods, and his earnest desire for the welfare of his people, began cautiously to approach his main design, which was, to instil into the King a belief that the Portuguese, who had so long possessed a footing in the islands, were now on the point of putting into execution a secret project which they had all along entertained, of gaining entire possession of the country, reducing the native inhabitants to subjection and slavery, and finally subverting the old worship, and substituting their own in its place.

In proof of all this, his ready invention

enabled him to relate various pretended facts, which he declared had come to his knowledge during a late religious pilgrimage he had made through the islands, and to the truth of which he pledged his priestly word, in the most solemn manner.

When he found that he had thus excited a deep interest and curiosity in the mind of the King, he ventured to approach a step nearer to his ultimate design, by hinting that it was in his island the attempt was first to be made, and that the time for making it was near at hand.

At last, when he thought he had sufficiently excited the fears as well as the confidence of the King, he ventured to hint that his late rescue from the hands of his enemy, the Chief of Ternata, was no other than a part of the deep designs entertained by these Portuguese; since, in giving to one of them the hand of Quisara, heir to the kingdom, it would place them at a pitch of power and influence which they could

not have hoped to compass so speedily by any other means.

At this insinuation, the noble nature of the King started,—and he looked with a penetrating glance at the seeming priest. But the countenance of the latter exhibited no evidence of the deceit he was practising. On the contrary, seeing at once, from the look and manner of the King, the danger of pressing this point too strongly at first, he begged him to suspend his opinion upon it for the present, till he should receive such proofs, either for or against a belief in it, as should make doubt impossible. He then, with a view to let what he said had make its due impression upon the mind of the King, proposed to take his leave at once, and not solicit his further attention to the subject of their conference, till he could confirm what he had said by further and more decisive proofs. He begged, however, in the meantime, to be allowed a brief interview with the Princess; not, as he said, to disclose to her the supposed

designs of the Portuguese, (that he left to the better wisdom and discretion of the King, either to give or to withhold, as he might see fit,) but merely to offer her holy counsel, in his character of pilgrim and priest.

Having thus in some degree shaken the confidence which the King had hitherto felt in Armusia, the Chief of Ternata proceeded to visit Quisara,—without whose involuntary aid he saw that it would be impossible for him to prosecute his insidious and deep-laid designs of vengeance.

The Princess received him in a manner, the precise interpretation of which set all his cunning at defiance. He felt assured that she did not penetrate his disguise, or suspect him to be other than he seemed. But she showed none of that profound reverence for his pretended office, which her universal character for piety to their gods had led him to expect;—though there was nothing in her manner in the least degree opposed to that character. What he most remarked, and

what called up a secret fear within him as he observed it, was the still, scrutinising, and thoughtful air with which she listened to all he said, and above all, to that which related to the imputed designs of Armusia, to change the religious worship of the island.

The Princess heard him for a long time attentively, but without uttering a word in reply, or affording the slightest indications by which he might gather what were the nature of her feelings in regard to his communications. At length, in order to prepare the means of at once convincing both her and the King of the imputed views of Armusia, he proposed that she should appoint a meeting with the young Portuguese, during which she should hint at the necessity of his abandoning his religious belief, and accepting hers, as an indispensable and understood condition of her fulfilling his claims upon her, as the rescuer of her brother. This proposal the insidious chief did not doubt of the Princess acceding to, on account of her known

preference for Ruy Dias, and the occasion that might thus be afforded her, of getting rid of those claims which were at present so fatally opposed to her love.

Whatever were the views and feelings of the Princess on this proposal of the seeming priest, it was no sooner named than her looks changed, from a meditative and inexpressive stillness, to a solemn animation, which lighted up her eyes, lifted and brightened her smooth brow, and seemed to pass through and pervade all her frame. She rose from her seat—signified her intention of immediately doing what the seeming priest had proposed—and then desired to be alone:—and the wily but shallow savage left her, fully convinced that at last he had hit upon the right means of furthering his deep designs.

He now, by unremitting watchfulness, aided by the influence which his assumed character gave him, contrived to learn the exact time and place of the meeting which Quisara almost immediately after his departure appointed with Armusia; and then he proceeded to apprise the King of it, (studiously concealing from him its precise object,) and engaged him to be at hand secretly; assuring him that he would not fail to meet with sufficient proofs of the imputed views and sentiments of Armusia:—for he shrewdly enough reckoned, that the tried and approved piety of the young Portuguese would take alarm at the proposal of Quisara, and that he would not fail to utter something, touching their island gods, which might be turned to the desired account.

CHAPTER IX.

On the morning after Quisara's late indignant dismission of Ruy Dias, (the same on which Quisara and the disguised Chief of Ternata met, as just described,) his blood at last seemed to rouse and assert itself; and filled and fired with shame and rage, he sought his nephew Piniero, and communicated to him what had passed on the preceding night; and he added his fixed determination to try at once his fortunes, either by fair means or foul, against this hated rival to all his hopes, both in ambition and in love.

"Let it be by fair means, good uncle," said Piniero, "and I am yours to be commanded, even against the man whose noble spirit I love and honour. But for the foul ones that you talk of, you must find some other hand to help them on, than his whose owner loves you too well to let you do an evil thing that he can hinder. And did you really," continued he, "know your own work in me so little, as to think that a word or a wish (even of yours) could turn it into nothing?—nay, into its worst opposite? - Briefly and honestly, uncle, - I seemed to do your hateful purposes against Armusia, only that I might undermine and mar them—finding, as I did, that a woman's wit was set upon them too: for else I had not feared but your own honourable nature had grown to hate them before they grew into acts. But now, the lady's conscience (caprice, some spell it) is as eager to have them stayed, as yesterday she was to urge them on. She has slept upon them: and women change their minds every time they change their head-gear. But no more of this!" added he, seeing that what he said had thrown Ruy Dias into a mood of silent thought, the

tone of which might mar Piniero's design of calling him back to honour and himself-"No more of this!—You seemed to hint at an honest mode at least—albeit a something silly one—of settling the matter. You cannot both possess the lady; and doubtless both of you love her much too well to think of letting her make her own choice between you!-So woo her like soldiers, at least—fight for her—win her. To tell you the truth, uncle, I shrewdly suspect you have no other chance of wearing her. She's a gallant dame after all—and will love him best, and only, who best deserves her. Tilt for her, then—and in her very presence too. There's the fairest spot in the island for it, just in front of her chamber window. And for your adversary, I'll be sworn he will not baulk your humour. Come—pen him a handsome invitation to the sport; and I'll bear it to him upon the point of my sword. And if I do not see fair play between you, say I love my uncle better than my honesty."

Thus the gay but noble-hearted Piniero ran on, in seeming want of thought, but in reality deeply anxious to recal Ruy Dies to that high sense of honour from which a soul-softening passion had for a while shaken him.

Ruy Dias remained fixed in inward thought; for some moments after Piniero had ceased to speak—his brow contracted—his hand (on which he leaned as he sat) pressed upon his nether lip, and his eyes fixed upon the ground. At last, without replying a word to what Piniero had said, and as if unconscious of having heard it, his brow suddenly cleared, he rose from his seat, and taking his nephew by the hand, addressed him thus:—

"Piniero, I have thought of what we talked of yesterday—and it must not be. It were unworthy both of us. Armusia is a soldier, and a brave one—and should die by daylight, and upon a soldier's sword. Go to him; tell him of his presumption in seeking the Princess, and of my previous claims upon her; and bid him either

give up his quest, or answer it upon the instant. There is a spot in front of the palace, fitted in all things to our purpose. In an hour I shall look for him there—either alone, or attended by one follower only. Go—and bring me his reply."

"Why, aye!" exclaimed Piniero, "this is something like! this is the talk of a Portugal, and a soldier!—Stir not hence, good uncle, till I return—and be sure your honest wishes shall not long want an honest reply."

Briefly,—Piniero sought and speedily found Armusia; it required but few words to settle the meeting; and the parties reached the appointed spot just as Quisara had sent a messenger in search of Armusia, to desire his attendance upon her at a certain time and place, as suggested by the seeming priest.

The Princess was sitting alone at her window, thinking deeply of the coming meeting with Armusia, and its results, when she saw at a little distance three persons approaching the

were Ruy Dias, Armusia, and Piniero all were armed.

The first impulse of Quisara was a one, of indistinct and tumultuous fea evident that the purposes of the m hostile. She had scarcely collected h with a view to determine on the cours pursue, when she saw Ruy Dias ar standing opposed to each other f while Piniero retired to some distar wait the event. Suddenly, a secr seemed to come to her, which, if still her fears, stayed all outward them; and she stood intently watchi sons before her.

They commenced the combat: a

each other; for while Ruy Dias assailed his adversary with an eager and impatient rage, which evidently impaired his otherwise perfect skill, Armusia seemed to act upon the defensive only, and with a cool and stedfast self-possession which gave him immeasurable advantages over his opponent, especially as his skill was no less perfect than that of Ruy Dias.

Presently, Ruy Dias, in his ungoverned haste, alipped on one knee, and had nearly lost his sword, and fallen to the ground. This accident, —of which Armusia did not seem to take the advantage that he might,—roused Ruy Dias to additional fury, and he rushed upon his adversary, with a despairing eagerness, which made it evident to Quisara that, now at least, the life of one or other was in immediate danger; and she was on the point of interfering, when, the next instant, she saw Ruy Dias stretched upon the ground, disarmed, and Armusia standing over him, with a noble anger burning in his cheek and eyes, and as if about to end, in the only way

that was left him, an enmity which his forbearance had seemed to increase, rather than appeare. At this instant, Quisara threw open the casements of her chamber; and exclaimed, in a voice of mingled command and entreaty,—

"Armusia, hold!—forbear!—for my sake spare him!—I ask it of your professed love for me."

Armusia looked up to where the voice came from; and, in a moment, the anger that glowed in his face passed away, and a calm, pale sadness took its place; the uplifted sword fell (not involuntarily) from his hand; and he retired a few steps from the fallen Ruy Dias, and continuing to look fervently up towards Quisara, said,—

"You cannot bid me do the thing, Lady, that I will not—if honour do not forbid it. Knowing that you love him," continued he,—looking down for an instant at Ruy Dias, who still lay upon the ground, with his face buried in his hands,—"Knowing that you love him, it had not come to this, but that my own life and

honour were at stake. Is there ought else you would command me, Lady?"

"I would confer with you," replied she; "my messenger is seeking you. I would see you, alone, here at the palace, in an hour."

She then immediately closed the window, and retired from view.

Meanwhile Piniero, half-angry, half-delighted, at this unlooked-for close of the combat, had come forward; and as the Princess disappeared from the window, he exclaimed,—

"S'death!—there's no keeping these women's tongues out of anything. They had rather do good with them, than do nothing. Now is here as pretty a piece of fighting as need be, marred in the very middle of it, and by the very she that set it on! And—to confess an undutiful truth—just as the best man of the two had got the best of it. Why, uncle," he continued,—stooping down to Ruy Dias, who still lay with his face on the ground,—"has a woman's tongue whistled away the life that it was moved to save? If so, she had better have held it,

and let a gentleman and a soldier die as he ought,
—upon a less dangerous and dexterous weapon.

Or has a short fighting-bout so fatigued you,
that you must needs sleep after it, to refresh you
for the next? Come! here's your noble adversary—a noble one he is, uncle—worth any
honest man's fighting with—he's waiting till you
are pleased to attend him elsewhere. I wonder
what peace-loving devil it was that possessed
us, to come here to fight: though I thought she
was bred of a fighting family, and loved the sport
too well to spoil it."

Piniero was fain to stop his glib tongue, and look with real grief upon Ruy Dias, as the latter now rose from where he lay, and showed a countenance filled with an expression of the most bitter anguish.

"Oh!" exclaimed he, in a deep, hollow voice, that shook with inward emotion, which he did not seek to suppress, "Oh! I am lost, Piniero—lost, lost!—I see that she contemns me. I am ashamed, dishonoured, lost!"

"Why, you are fairly beaten, uncle," said

Piniero, "if that includes all the ills you talk of; which I do not see, considering that (with reverence to kin be it spoken) the beater is a better man than the beaten! But if the lady contemns you, (as you seem to think,) she has taken a true woman's way of showing it. At any rate you are luckier in her hate than her love—for it has saved your life."

"Oh, I am lost!" resumed Ruy Dias, not noticing Piniero's free talk, which nothing could stop for long together.

"If you think, Sir," said Armusia, advancing towards Ruy Dias with an air of frank composure, "that you have lost any honour by a meeting ending as this must, you wrong both yourself and me. I would fainer (as your friend here knows) have offered my hand and sword in your service, than against you. But he would have it otherwise. I would so offer them still, but that I know not what chance seems to have made them hateful to you. At least let me say, (and I will, when you please

to bid me, say it to all the world, and hold him my enemy who doubts it,) that it was I, not you, who withdrew from this combat, and will never again meet my opposite in it, unless as a friend. I would ask to meet him as one now, if his anger (which I have not deserved) will let me:" and he held out his hand to Ruy Dias, who, after a momentary struggle which seemed to shake his whole frame, took it without uttering a word, or lifting his head from the dejected posture in which it had hung motionless since he last spoke.

Finding that neither Ruy Dias nor his friend spoke, (for the usual loquacity of Piniero did not on this occasion aid him in getting rid of the burst of honest feeling which he was somewhat awkwardly struggling to suppress,) Armusia continued:—

"Must we, because we would worthily love the same lady, hate each other? I have ever heard Ruy Dias held as the soul of honour; and had I earlier known his love for the Princess

Quisara, I had not sought to do that which herself declared should alone win her. having done it; and having, in doing it, lighted up a love within me which, else, I had not dared to think of; I dare as little despair, till she bids me do so. To my thinking, then, our love should make us friends, rather than foes; since, if we love her as such a lady should be loved, it is for her good, not our own. Above all, Ruy Dias, weigh not at a feather my (socalled) claims upon her. The very naming of them, more that cancels them. I would win Quisara by her own free love, or lose her; for her love, and that alone, can so illustrate him on whom it falls, that he must in some sort feel himself lifted to her high level. Let us then be rivals in our humble duty alone; and, (by my hopes of her high love!) if it should fall on you, I will (if for that alone) honour you next only to herself. Once more let me say," continued Armusia after a pause. "I would fain

VOL. 11.

F

know Ruy Dias as a friend, but can never again know him as an adversary."

He then held forth his hand as he was motioning to depart, and it was silently seized by Ruy Dias, and pressed to lips that trembled with mingled emotions of remorse and admiration, and wetted by tears that now for the first time rose to Ruy Dias's eyes, and seemed to clear them from the mists of passion that had lately distorted all things around him.

- "I may live to requite this noble bearing," said he.
- "Do, and be yourself!" exclaimed Piniero: and Armusia departed, leaving the uncle and nephew to their own thoughts, and pursuing his way to prepare for the meeting with Quisara.

CHAPTER X.

Armusia and Quisara met in an outer chamber of the Princess's apartments, to which there was an ante-room, where the wily Chief of Ternata, under his seeming character of priest, had (not without much difficulty) persuaded the King to accompany him at the hour appointed for the meeting, and where they could overhear much, but not the whole, of what passed.

Quisara was the first to speak. Advancing towards Armusia as he entered, she presented her hand to him, with a look of frank pleasure in her countenance, not unaccompanied by a slight embarrassment of manner, which, however, soon passed away.

"I would fain thank you, Sir," said she, "and, if I could, requite you, for the noble love you have shown towards me. It was to do the first that I invited you hither. For the requital, I know not how I can offer it,—since you have made me think it is my love alone that can requite you; and that, as you have doubtless ere this conjectured, has been at least proffered to another. Let me say, however, that it was proffered only as the price of a worthiness which it did not find; and that (if I know myself) it is still mine to bestow. Thus much was due from me, both to you and to myself. I have heard," continued she, after a brief pause, and perceiving that Armusia did not offer to speak—"I have heard that, in your country, women are won by lip-worship and by looks; that he alone is deemed worthy of them, who can see nothing worthy but in her he seeks; and that to sue and sigh for their favour, is to deserve and gain it. I know not what manner of love this may be, or how those use and value it

who so achieve it: but to my thinking, that which can rest on air must be lighter than the air it rests on, and as variable."

She paused; and Armusia, who was gazing upon her in rapt silence, as soon as he seemed to lose the sound of her voice, exclaimed passionately,—

"Oh, speak on, Lady! Speak on for ever, that I may gaze and listen! I know not whither your discourse would lead me; but as my ears drink in its eloquent music, I feel high hopes spring up to life within me; filling me with thoughts that I should fear to utter. Oh, speak on!"

"I said," resumed she, "that I have heard your Portugal ladies love men for loving them. True this is a condition wanting which a woman's love should not, nay, cannot, grow into strength and perfectness. But as little can it live, nourished on this alone. At least it is thus with mine. I loved Ruy Dias for what I thought him; not because he loved me. Not

finding him what I thought, he and his love are become as nothing to me."

Pausing for a moment, her voice took a tone of mingled tenderness and solemnity, as she thus resumed,—

"Now, Armusia, hear me!—What I looked for in another, I seem to have found in you—found it in him to whom (putting all other claims aside) my gratitude no less than my vow had bound me, till his own noble nature released the bond: in this as wise as noble. I have found you all that I hoped to find; I think you, all that a woman's thoughts—a woman and a princess—would have in him she loves:—I think you this; one trial more may prove it."

"Name it, Lady," exclaimed Armusia eagerly, "name it! and if it stand within the compass of my will and power, believe it done."

"Be not precipitate," said Quisara, gravely, and pausing, as if hesitating and lingering about her thoughts before she could put them into words. "What I shall ask of you is not a deed that hands or swords can do. The immortal mind—the soul alone can act it. Let that but will it, and it is done."

"Then is it surely done," exclaimed Armusia fervently. "Had it been a deed for the weak body to do, I might have feared or doubted."

As Quisara still paused, he continued, "Speak, Lady, and have your will performed; for my high love (I may now name it without offence) has so lifted up the soul on which it has descended, that I feel a power within it prompting to thoughts which else it never could have compassed."

A less impassioned and self-occupied spectator than Armusia, might have observed and wondered at the increasing embarrassment that now grew upon Quisara, as she approached more nearly to the subject of her thoughts. She looked upon Armusia as if she would penetrate his very soul, though she knew that her next words would lay it open at once to her view; and she seemed to shrink from uttering those words,

lest they might scatter into air, instead of change into reality, the imaginary fabric of bliss on which she had built her new hopes. Once or twice she seemed on the point of abandoning her design of trying Armusia further. At length, after looking upon him steadfastly for some moments, she exclaimed, in a tone of impassioned fervour which had not hitherto accompanied her words,—

"Briefly, Armusia, he whom I love must be as one with me—one in all things—but most of all in mind, and that which springs from it and dwells in it. He must be one with me in thought and wish and will—in hopes and fears; else I can never wed him: I dare not, and I will not." Here she paused for a moment, and then added,—"This, then, is what I ask of you:—Give up your country's gods,—renounce their worship,—abjure the fearful power they hold over you;—and own the sway of mine."

At first, Armusia seemed confounded and struck dumb by these words; and he stood gazing upon Quisara, with looks of doubt and inquiry, in which a feeling of vague terror was mingled—as if he had been communing with a seeming angel, who had suddenly changed before his face into an apparent demon. Then, seeming to recall his late thoughts, and recover his former state of feeling, he motioned as if shaking off some besetting trouble, and exclaimed with a forced smile,—

"Oh! I see,—you do but try me, Lady. You would not have me do this thing—the bare thought of which strikes a cold terror through me. Say that you would not—that you did but speak these words, to try the value of my faith; knowing that he who could be false to his God, could not be true to anything—not even to a love like mine for you. Say this, I beseech you,—and in saying it, lift the load of fear from off my heart, which your words have flung upon it."

A hurried smile, as if of pleasure—which she seemed anxious to suppress—passed across the

face of Quisara, as Armusia spoke thus; but there was no apparent correspondence with it in her reply:

"Armusia," said she, "I repeat, he whom I love and wed must be of one faith with me."

"Then be thou a Christian!" exclaimed he, fervently; then, looking up to heaven, with lifted hands, and an expression in which piety and human passion were mingled, he added,—"Oh! if that could be, I were blessed indeed!"

Quisara, without seeming to notice his words, continued,—

"Again, I ask,—can you bow down before our island altars? Worship our gods? Join in our rites and ceremonies? Honour our priests, and——"

"No more," interrupted Armusia; "I dare not even hear such words;—to have listened to them twice is an impiety at which my flesh trembles what were it then to act them?"

Then as if the thoughts which accompanied

these last words had worked up his feelings to a paroxysm of pious rage, which even the presence in which he stood could not controul, he added,—

"Your gods? what are they but stocks and stones? or, at best, unconscious creatures, made for man's use and pleasure, not his worship? Your altars? Do they not reek with innocent blood? Your rites and ceremonies? Impious and senseless mockeries! Your priests? Cunning impostors, that feed and fatten on the lies they utter, and laugh at those who trust them! Honour these? Forsake my faith—the Christian's faith—for these?"

Here the concealed King could scarcely restrain himself from coming forward, and interrupting the scene to which he had been induced to listen—thinking that by so doing he might prevent Armusia from proceeding farther in his rage against their gods. But his crafty companion, seeing that enough had not yet been uttered to justify violent measures against Armusia, used the influence which his priestly

seeming gave him, to prevent the King from disclasing himself.

Meanwhile Armusia, seeming suddenly to fall, from the height of his rage, into a feeling of fearful self-abasement, went on, as if meditating within himself;—

"Whither have I been wandering? On the edge of what an imminent precipice do I stand? Love her this way?—this most destroying way? Barter my soul for her?—Is it for this, then, that my hopes have been lifted up to heaven—only to be cast down again lower than the earth I tread on?——"

"Armusia," said Quisara, as he paused,—an anxious pleasure filling her countenance as she spoke—"Armusia, you said you loved me, and bade me name what I would have you do to make us one. It is by having one faith that alone we can be one."

"Let me hear no more!" exclaimed he. "Sorrow and shame strike inward to my heart, and make it tremble, at the very sound of your dangerous

voice—much more at the hateful words it utters. And when I look upon your beauty, a demon light seems to encompass it, that, if I gaze on it longer, may lead me on to ruin. Farewell!—I dare not stay with you—nor would I—for my love is changing, as I speak, into a strange fear, that troubles and oppresses me. Farewell! But let me not go without proclaiming aloud—as I would if your whole island heard me—the hatred that I feel for the impious mockeries to which you would entice me. Know that I spurn at your puppet gods-contemn their power-despise their juggling priests, and loathe their sacrifices, Nay-I must tell you, Ladythoughts are stirring in me even now, which prompt me to overturn your blood-stained altar, -pull down your deities from their painted seats, and cast them into the dust from which they are moulded—and, rasing their polluted temples to the ground, plant on their ruins the holy cross of Christ. Once more farewell!farewell for ever!"

"Stay!" exclaimed the seeming priest, coming forward from the inner chamber, preceded by the King. "Stay!—think not your impious threatenings against our gods and worship have passed unheard by those whose duty it is to mark and punish them."

Saying this, he hurried from the chamber, as if seeking some one without; while the King, addressing himself mildly to Armusia, endeavoured to remonstrate with him on what he had heard. But Armusia seemed only moved to a more uncontrollable anger, at finding that his interview with Quisara had been watched, and his words listened to. A sudden suspicion seemed to come across him, that the whole affair had been so contrived, to entrap him to his destruction; and the feeling gave new life and vigour to the noble rage that possessed him. Instead, therefore, of listening to the friendly words and wishes of the King, he only gave loose the more unrestrainedly to the various feelings that were at work within him; and when

which he had been seeking, he found Armusia exclaiming more fervently than ever against the pretended faith that could teach and countenance the base treachery of which he conceived himself to be the victim.

Even the King himself was moved to a sort of vague and superstitious terror at his words; and his cunning and watchful enemy, seeing the effect they had produced, took advantage of the moment, and hurried away the guards with their prisoner.

Meantime, the appearance and conduct of Quisara during this crisis would have been utterly inexplicable to those who were present, even if they had not been too fully absorbed in their own feelings to observe it. She seemed scarcely moved even to surprise, at the unexpected entrance of the King; and when she saw who it was that accompanied him, a sudden thought seemed to shoot across her mind, which lighted her face with a look of quick and eager

a moment resumed her wonted composure, and appeared to withdraw her thoughts from all outward things, and concentrate them within her: and during the rest of the scene she stood silent and self-absorbed, and at the conclusion of it retired to her inner apartment, and permitted the seeming priest to withdraw with the King, as if she took no part or interest in their future purposes.

CHAPTER XI.

The news of Armusia's imprisonment soon spread through the island; and at first it created a feeling of indignant surprise, even in the natives themselves, proportioned to the gratitude they had felt towards him for the rescue of their beloved King. But among his countrymen, the Portuguese, it instantly called forth a fiery anger, that threatened to blaze out at once into open rebellion against the King.

Piniero was among the first who heard of it; and it stirred up afresh those feelings within him which sprung from the late disgrace of his uncle, Ruy Dias. "Now," thought he to himself (and as usual he put his thoughts into

audible words) — "Now does Fortune give this foolish uncle of mine one more chance than he deserves, of wiping away the unseemly soil this precious love of his has stuck upon his honour; -for there it does stick, though all the world but he and I are blind to it. I thought what would come of doing good to these graceless savages. As if anybody bred out of Europe could know the difference between a benefit and an injury—when (to say truth) only one in a hundred of those bred in it do so! And yet I could not swear that this same heroic Portugal deserves much better than he has met with,—for letting his wit and courage work out such a fool's errand. No wonder she jilted him for his pains:—as if a woman—not to say a Princess would be expected to pay a man in any other coin, for taking her at her word, when she pretended a wish to lay down a sceptre that Fortune had just placed in her hands! Once give them supreme sway—though it be but over a mousetrap—and beware what ground you tread on, if

they do but suspect you of a wish to curtail them in it. No-if Armusia had done nothing more worthy of a Portugal, a soldier, and a gentleman, than risk his own and his friends' lives in letting loose a cunning savage, who had been caught and caged by another still more cunning, he might have knocked long enough at his prison door for his pains, before Piniero had stepped aside to open it. But his noble bearing yesterday, bespeaks him one who must not be left in the mire of a malicious fortune, while honest men are at hand to help him out of it. And yet," continued he, after considering for a few moments, "there is but one who can so help him; and he (to the shame of my blood be it said) is no miracle of honesty—if indeed (which I would not swear) he is not himself at the bottom of the plot. But no," added he more gravely, "it cannot be. It must be tried, however; and I see the way."

Piniero immediately proceeded towards the spot where he expected to find Ruy Dias; they

presently met; and the result of their conference will be gathered from the sequel.

Meanwhile the day closed, leaving the Kingutterly undecided as to the course he should
adopt with respect to Armusia. His disguisedenemy, the Chief of Ternata, had hourly gained
more and more influence over him, through the
medium of his strong religious feelings; while
his gratitude towards Armusia seemed to grow
in strength, the more imperatively he seemed
called upon to take measures against the avowal
he had lately heard, and which, apparently, confirmed from Armusia's own lips all that he had
been told, as to his dangerous designs.

At length, on the morning of the day after Armusia's committal to prison, the King determined on seeing him once more, and leaving no means untried of at least satisfying himself as to the real views and feelings of Armusia; while the Chief of Ternata, finding that he could not turn the King from this design, or by any arguments induce him to take violent measures against

Armusia without further deliberation, persuaded him to let the meeting take place in the hall of the palace—thinking that Armusia might be led to repeat publicly his late insults upon their gods and temples, and thus excite the people to join in the call for vengeance against him, which the priests, on the report of their seeming brother, had already raised and re-echoed throughout the island.

Accordingly, the audience was formally announced; and the Princess (who had not quitted her apartments since the meeting of the preceding evening) was desired by the King to attend it;—for he thought that, through her influence, Armusia might at least be induced to assist in appeasing the rage which the priests were everywhere expressing against him, and which they already accompanied by an undisguised call for his death, in the name and on the behalf of their insulted gods.

When all things were prepared for the reception of Armusia, he was brought from the

prison to which he had been conducted on the preceding day; and he entered the hall of audience at the same moment with Quisara and her attendants.

The looks and bearing of Quisara and Armusia, indicated that the feelings which were stirring within them, and which were to direct their conduct during this most trying moment of their lives, were altogether different in their nature; though in each they were equally active, intense, and self-absorbed.

Of Armusia, a settled melancholy seemed to bave taken possession, which, on his first entering, bent his eyes to the ground, and spread its pale still hue over all his countenance. Mixed with it, too, there was an occasional restlesaness of manner, which seemed to indicate a sense of the imminent peril in which he had placed himself, and the utter inefficacy of his own unassisted powers to escape from it. But above all, there was a look of high and calm resolve seated upon his brow, and settled as if for ever within

his eyes, which seemed to show that no doubtful misgivings, or feeble self-questionings, had induced him for an instant to balance or debate within himself, as to the course he should pursue; but that, on the contrary, knowing of a surety what his duty and his honour required of him, that he was prepared to do, as if it were a thing fated and fixed, and not even capable of happening otherwise.

The bearing of Quisara was altogether different. A lofty and solemn, yet mysterious and undefined pleasure looked forth from her eyes as she entered; while an expression of something like proud exultation spread itself over all her features, and gave an air of more than ordinary elevation to her stately and steadfast gait,—seeming to bespeak thoughts and feelings of a new and more noble character than she had hitherto entertained. Yet, interfused through all these, there was her usual tone of soft and feminine tenderness,—which was increased, rather than impaired, by a doubtful

look, as if the new hopes that had come to her were not unalloyed by fearful forbodings as to the events which were at hand. On entering the hall she proceeded at once towards the King,—looking neither to the right hand nor the left but seating herself beside him, with a calm self-collected air, as if she was come thither as a judge of what was about to take place, rather than one deeply concerned in it.

The report of Armusia's imprisonment, and the cause of it, having spread through the island, and everywhere excited feelings of interest and curiosity, the present meeting took the character of a public trial, which all were anxious to witness, whose stations gave them access to the palace. It was observable, however, not without surprise, that Ruy Dias and Piniero, as well as the immediate friends of Armusia, were absent.

As soon as the Princess had taken her place in the hall, and some words had passed (aside) between the King and the seeming priest who stood near him, the former addressed Armusia thus,—

"Let me not scruple, Portugal, to avow, thus publicly, that I owe to you more than my life. I owe to you that liberty to use my life in the service of my people, without which life itself were as nothing to me. It is a heavy debt you have laid upon me; and I feel it doubly heavy now that you have compelled me to weigh it against that duty to my people which is still more sacred, in a king, than that of gratitude itself. I would fain reconcile these duties. Teach me to do so, by telling me that the fearful words I lately heard you utter were words only, or that I mistook their import."

"King," exclaimed the seeming priest, taking advantage of a momentary pause, "this may not be. Pardon the seeming boldness of one who dares not be lukewarm in the cause of those powers to which Kings themselves owe their allegiance. It is in their name I speak, it is their will I utter, in declaring this Por-

٩

tugal's life a forfeit to their just anger, and that they who would seek to shield him from their vengeance, must look to feel it upon their own heads."

There was a murmur of excited feeling heard throughout the ball as he spoke.

"You bid this Christian," continued be, "unsay the daring impleties that he uttered, thinking them unheard, except by ears that he would fain have corrupted by them; --- you ask him to disavow designs which doubtless our gods themselves prompted him to confess, and aided me, their humble instrument, to penetrate and unmask. Think you he will be slow to do this, if in doing it he gains one step towards his impious wishes? Rather let the Princess, towards whom his seemingly mad avowals were directed, declare his purpose in making them, and so remove from her own head the displeasure which our offended gods must feel, against any one,-even herself,-who could allently listen to them. I call upon her, in the name of those

gods, to bear witness against this man;—and having heard her testimony,—which cannot but confirm what we ourselves have listened to,—I once more adjure you, O King, to appease the outraged powers who preserve and protect us, by pronouncing the present death of this Portugal."

Speaking thus, he turned towards the Princess, with half-veiled eyes, betokening a sly distrust as to the effect of his words;—for he had all along been perplexed by her manner towards him, since his disguise had enabled him to communicate with her, and still more by the unaccountable silence she had hitherto preserved, in regard to the scene of the preceding evening.

Quisara cast a penetrating look towards him, as he appealed to her; and then, turning towards Armusia, and looking steadfastly upon him for a few moments, she at length said,—

"Let Armusia himself speak, and let him be judged by his own words. What he uttered yesterday should, in justice, pass as if unsaid;—

since it was heard by an unworthy stratagem, and was moreover (let me not scruple to say it) wrung from him by thoughts and feelings, which would have had no existence, but for his own free and generous abandonment of his claims upon me, as liberator of my royal brother. Let Armusia pause before he speaks," continued she, still looking at him steadfastly, and with a deep meaning in her looks, "and weigh well the peril that awaits him: and let him still bear in mind, that Quisara's word is sacred, and that the hour which sees him of one Faith with her, also sees him (if he so wills) her lord and husband—the honoured husband of as humble and duteous a wife as if he had wed the poorest and meanest in the land. Let him pause and balance, and then speak."

Immediately Quisara ceased to speak, Armusia replied, in a slow and subdued, but calm, firm, and self-possessed voice.

"I need not pause, Lady-for I dare not balance. Your words shake my heart, as the

thunder shakes the deep-founded rock—they shake, but cannot move it. What I have said, is said. If I do not repeat it, it is not that I. fear to do so; but that what I uttered yesterday was spoken in passion and in anger; and such words come ill from calm lips. The Christian's faith, if held aright, teaches him to confide humbly for himself,-not to exult proudly over others; its truth springs not from the errors of other faiths—its purity and power dwell not in their foulness and weakness. What more need I say?" continued he, after a pause.—" For my life, it is less than nothing to me, now that the hopes on which it hung are broken. I would scarce stir my hand to save it." Then, addressing himself still more directly towards the Princess, and looking at her with a tender sadness which seemed, as he yielded himself up to it, to fetch the tears into his eyes, he added,--" But let me say, Lady-had it been my lot to have won your high love, I would have worn it, as only a Christian can—in the

immediate sanctuary of my soul—next only to that holier image round which my faith clings; and I would have sought to deserve it, as only it can be deserved—by teaching you to know and feel the beauties of that faith—by making you a Christian."

"You have made me a Christian!" exclaimed Quisara, in a firm and solemn voice,—rising from her seat as she spake.

The whole assembly seemed moved at once to murmurs of eager surprise, as the Princess uttered these words; and both the King and the seeming priest were about to speak;—but she hushed all to an involuntary silence, by a stately motion of her head and hand; and then continued as follows,—

"Armusia, so far as they have sprung from me, your trials are at an end. I have proved you to the uttermost, and found you in all things what I would have you—above all, in this last. Your perfect love for me had before conquered my affections;—your Faith, as I have now beheld It in its fruits, has won my reason and my soul. That must needs be true and noble, from which such truth and nobleness springs; and I will embrace and follow it, whithersoever it may lead me. Armusia, I am a Christian, and your wife, if you will make me such; and I will share whatever fate these blind and ungrateful men would fix on you; I swear it, by the new Power whose will I feel stirring within me."

As she paused, the King and his wily enemy

(both of whom had hitherto been struck into a
dumb astonishment at her words) turned to each
other, with looks, the one of blank amazement,
the other of hurried and restless disappointment.
But the seeming priest perceived at once that
his deep-laid plans of revenge were now on the
point of being frustrated at least, if not exposed,
unless he could take advantage of the superstitious terror which for the moment possessed
the King, to hurry him on to some desperate
measure, and then make his escape from the

island, during the confusion and trouble which the successful termination of his stratagema would cause. Without waiting, therefore, for the King to speak, he exclaimed,—

"Now, King,-was it a false danger that I prophesied? 'Tis as I feared. Had he not known this, he had not dared to utter, even to the Princess, the monstrous impicties which vesterday we heard from him. The shaft is plumed, which, if once sped, is fatal to our faith and worship. It must be broken, at whatever cost. King, they must both die! There is no other way. You know the influence the Princess holds over your people. The crisis is desperate. Once more I pronounce the will of our insulted gods, in saying that both their lives are forfeit. Let him," continued he,-pointing his finger towards Armusia, as if with a view the more forcibly to rouse the already excited indignation of the people present against him, - " Let him be led to immediate execution."

A shout of approving exultation burst from

was utterly confounded and lost, amid the contending feelings that possessed him. A wild confusion looked forth from his eyes; and he seemed incapable of interfering, even by a word or motion, to prevent the insolent boldness of his concealed enemy from carrying his meditated vengeance into immediate effect.

At this instant, in the midst of the expectant silence that followed the shout of the assembly, a burst of artillery was heard at a distance without; and the next moment a messenger rushed into the hall, and making his way to the upper part, where the King sat, informed him that the Portugals had all retired into the fort which commanded the town, and had opened the batteries upon it, and that a messenger was at hand, bearing a communication from Ruy Dias.

The person alluded to almost immediately appeared at the entrance of the hall; and as soon as the agitated state of the assembly permitted silence to be obtained, he proclaimed his

errand aloud, to the effect that unless Armusia was within half an hour delivered safely into the hands of his friends and countrymen, they would lay the town in ashes.

The disguised Chief of Ternata, instead of being disconcerted by this news, conceived fresh hopes of success from it; for he thought that if he could but persuade the King to resist this bold attempt on the part of the Portugals to rescue their countryman, it might bring about even more mischief than he had looked for from the full success of his own stratagems; and, moreover, that he himself would be more secure of escape in the confusion that would ensue. He, therefore, immediately put to proof the whole strength of his lately acquired influence over the mind of the King, by endeavouring to persuade him, that he might safely treat the message of Ruy Diss with contempt; and that all he need do to recover possession of the power which he had so unfortunately trusted into the hands of these strangers, was, to temporize with them, by

means of mingled expectations and threatenings, as to the life of Armusia.

The King's mind (the character of which was gentleness and ductility, rather than strength and firmness) had been so entirely confounded and perplexed by the thoughts and feelings attendant on the events of the last twenty-four hours, that he seemed at last disposed to yield himself up blindly to the suggestions of his wily enemy; and the latter was on the point, in the King's name, of crowning the mischief he had brought about, by sending back Ruy Dias's messenger with marks of contempt and obloquy, -when a confusion of voices was heard at the entrance of the hall, as if some one was forcing his way through the crowd without; and the next moment Piniero was seen, making his way up the hall, towards the spot where the King and Princess were situated.

"Where is this same priest?" exclaimed he with a triumphant smile, as he kept making his hurried way through the crowd that impeded his

passage up the hall;—" where is this reverend labourer in his vocation, of setting honest people together by the ears? Let him have a care how his own fare in the attempt!—Surely," continued he, as he approached the spot where the diaguised Chief of Ternata stood, and looked at him more closely,—" surely some of us should know that face—fringed and furbelowed as it is since we saw it here a week ago, on as bold and impudent an errand as now, and one that was happily destined to end as unwelcomely!"

So saying, without another word he rushed suddenly upon the seeming priest, and tearing off his false beard, and forcing open his outer vestment, discovered the face and attire of the Chief of Ternata.

In an instant all hands and voices were raised against him; and it required the utmost exertions of Piniero, aided by the commands of the King himself, (whose good sense and self-possession seemed to return to him as if by magic at this disclosure,) to preserve him from the imme-

diate fury of the people present. The next moment saw him change places with the intended victim of his revenge, and abandon himself, in sullen silence, to the fate that awaited him.

Meanwhile, the feelings and thoughts of Armusia and Quisara seemed to glance for an instant at this new event, and then to turn towards each other, and settle there, into a deep and calm self-abandonment,—as if a sudden and unhoped-for movement of the sea of doubt and fear, at the mercy of which they had lately been floating hither and thither, had at last borne them at once into the haven of their hopes.

Referring back for a moment to the events which led to this happy consummation, it is only needful to relate, that Piniero, on inquiring into the circumstances connected with the imprisonment of Armusia, soon found that it had been brought about by the immediate intervention of the seeming priest who was newly arrived on the island, and of whom nobody could give any account. He learned also, from Panura,

the favourite attendant of the Princess, that the King himself was in no degree favourable to the measures taken against Armusia, but that they were hurried on without his commands, and almost against them, by the impudent boldness of this new confident and adviser. Having now communicated with his uncle, Ruy Dias, and found that the noble bearing and conduct of Armusia the day before had recalled him to himself, and dispersed the blinding mists that passion had for a while spread before his mental vision, they consulted together on the best means of turning aside the peril that seemed to threaten Armusia; and the bold measure of closing the gates of the fort, and then demanding his immediate release, was determined on, and left to the execution of Ruy Dias. Piniero then renewed his inquiries respecting the proceedings of the seeming priest; and finding that he studiously avoided all direct intercourse with the priests of the land, a vague suspicion came across him, that treachery was at work. With

this clue to lead him, and the assistance of Panura in enabling him to watch every instant of the seeming priest's retirement when he left the private apartment of the King, Piniero soon satisfied himself that the object of his observation, whoever he was, was at least disguised for some sinister purpose. This was enough to determine Piniero in the course he should pursue, and the moment he should choose to complete his discovery. Its results we have just seen.

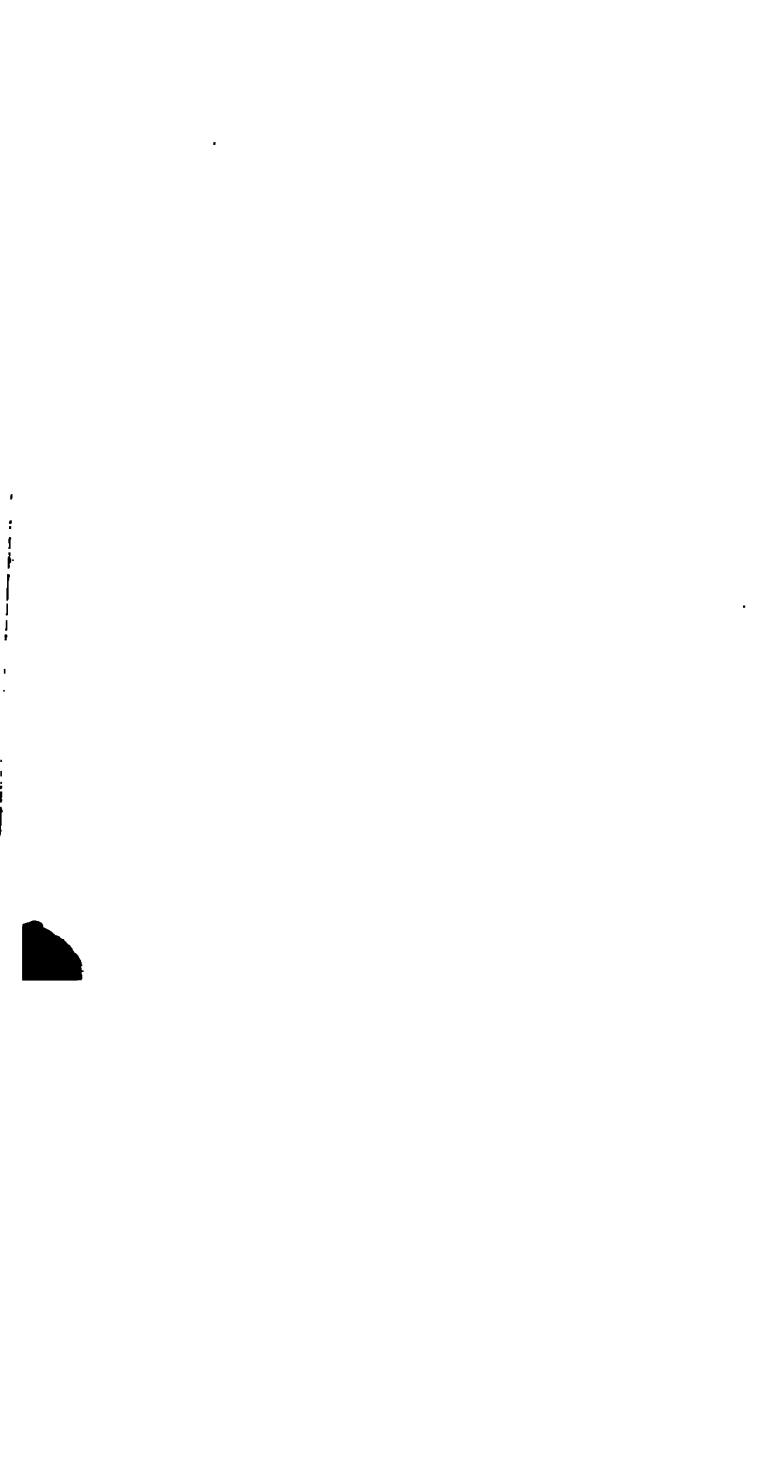
And now, it is scarcely needful to relate in detail the concluding events of our story; since those which have already been told sufficiently point out the course of them. It must be added, however, that Quisara's love for Armusia, springing as it did from the strength rather than the weakness of her character, now grew at once into that perfect esteem on which alone a permanent affection between man and woman can be founded; and it soon learned to blend itself sweetly with that pure faith of which it is the

nearest earthly type, and to the spirit of which it is closely allied.

As for Armusia,—the pious exaltation of mind which had been called forth in him by the perils that seemed to surround him, and the noble sacrifices that his truth and honour called upon and prompted him to make, speedily subsided into that calm and full contentment of spirit which waits on a fulfilled hope, and an accomplished purpose;—while the new joy that sprang within him at the certain prospect of seeing her whom he loved of one faith with himself, gave an animation to his thoughts, which kept them from clinging with too voluptuous a softness to the bliss that awaited him.

Finally, the good King, delivered from the maze of doubts in which the malicious cunning of his enemy had contrived to entangle him, once more gave way to that gratitude towards Armusia which was the natural movement of his heart: and moreover, instead of being led, by

the late act of Ruy Dias and his friends, to withdraw his confidence from them, he did but seek occasion to show them new favour, as the instruments of saving him from the shame and sorrow of sacrificing, in a moment of temporary blindness, his deliverer and friend. Indeed, so fully did they grow in his esteem and confidence, after the union of Quisara with Armusia, that the latter was speedily enabled to realize, in the midst of peace and good-will, the thought which his pious anger had first bred within him, of planting the holy emblem of Christianity on spots which had for ages been polluted by altars raised by cunning and cupidity, upheld by ignorance and fear, and cemented by human blood.



AFTER sundry acute and sagacious criticisms had been expended on the foregoing Tale, all of which we shall permit the reader to have the satisfaction of making for himself, the story-teller next in succession observed as follows:—

"Well,—for my part I will not say how well I think of your Tale itself; for fear you should say I am providing beforehand for the indulgence that my own will (for particular reasons) especially need. But I will say how entirely I applaud the course that both my precursors have adopted, of choosing subjects which have been previously used by the greatest writers;—for if I mistake not, the Tale we have just heard is founded on a play by one of the best of our old dramatists. The question is, whether my own adherence to the rule I so approve, has not led me to a vicious extreme: I am sure it has led me to a very dangerous one;—for I have not merely adopted a subject which has been used

for his most beautiful and best-known drama by the poblest as well as the best known of our dramatists after Shakespeare, but have, in the few instances where it suited my purpose, put his very language into the mouths of my characters.

"You smile at my audacity:-but it is, I'm afraid, that very questionable species of boldness which is sometimes born of sheer cowardice. The truth is simply this: I had determined on treating a theme which includes the highest elements of human passion; and when I came to those particular points at which the passion mounted the highest, I found that it necessarily took the form of poetry: meaning, by poetry, those thoughts, imaginations, and feelings, which voluntary move harmonious numbers — that intense stretch and pitch of human passion, the attempt to express which in words, whether in the lowest of mankind or in the highest, almost invariably takes a measured form-a form more or less rhythmical—a form that the world has consented to call verse.

"And now—see my dilemma. I must either attempt to express in dramatic verse what the greatest master of such verse that ever lived except Shakespeare (for such is Fletcher, so far as regards mere beauty of expression, and sweetness and volubility of sound) had so expressed before me;—or, I must bring his verse into juxta-position with my own poor prose.

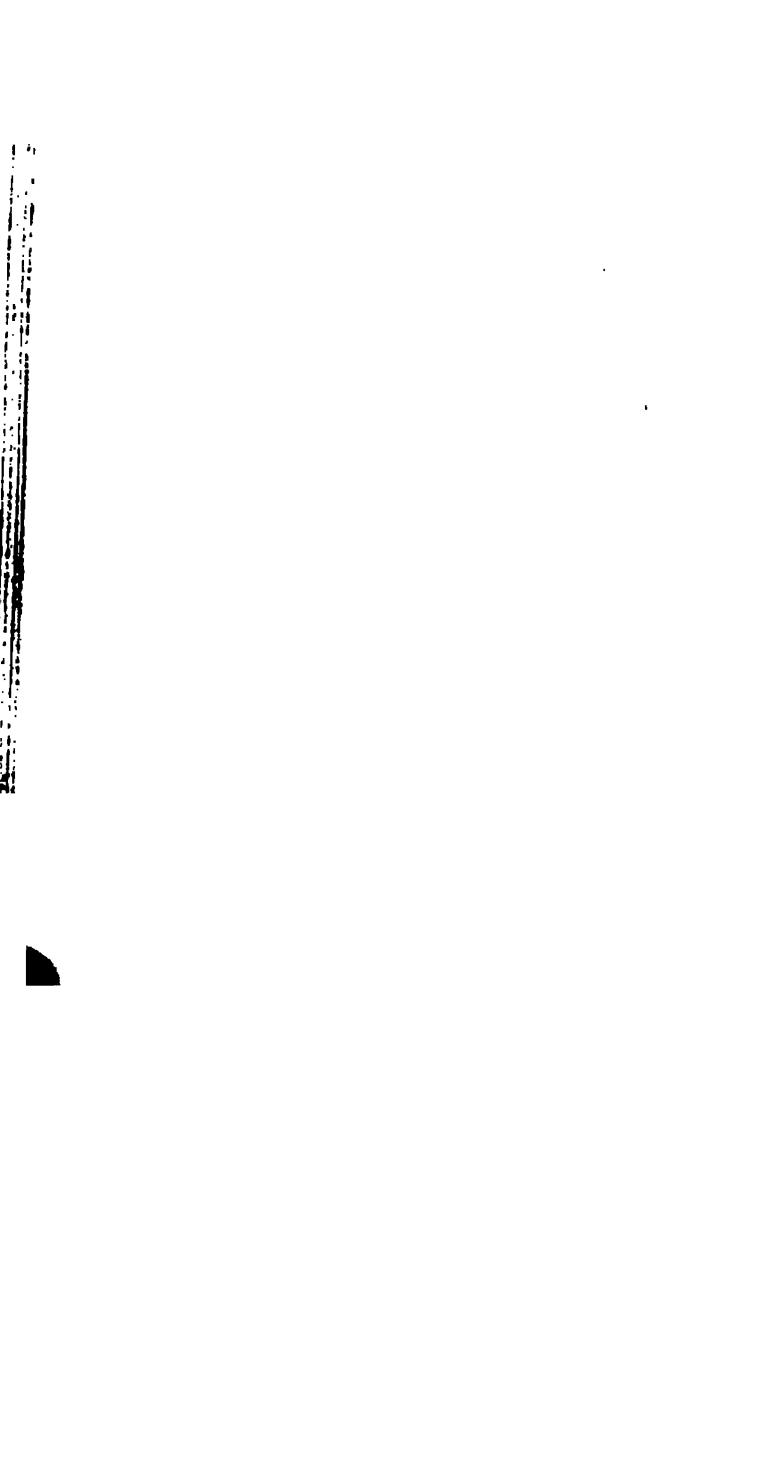
"I could not hesitate between the choice of evils; and I must bear the penalty of that choice. But you must do me the justice to believe, it was a choice I had no thought of incurring till it was too late to be avoided:—for I had set my heart upon the story in question—so strongly indeed, that the eloquent tirade of our friend (in which there is much truth, I confess) touching the demerits of Love, as a subject for moving the sympathy of the modern reader, could not deter me from adopting it."



THE FAITHFUL

AND THE

THE FAITHLESS.



THE

FAITHFUL AND THE FAITHLESS.

CHAPTER I.

MELANTIUS, chief captain of the army of the King of Rhodes, had been absent from the court for many months, fighting successfully against the enemies of his country; and he had at length conquered from them a safe and honourable peace, and arrived at home on the day which witnessed the marriage of his young and noble friend, Amintor.

There existed between Melantius and Amintor an intimacy and friendship which are seldom found to grow up between two persons so different in age, habits, and occupation: for Melantius (now no longer young) had passed much of his life in camps, and was a true

his high pretensions; hot and implacable in his resentments; and no more of a courtier than his station about the person of the King necessarily made him:—while Amintor, still in the bloom of youth, had scarcely breathed any air but that of a palace and its precincts, and had imbibed therewith a pliant softness, both of sentiment and demeanour, which might seem to consort but ill with the steadfast plainness of manner, and uncompromising bonour, of the gallant and high-born chief.

But even when a boy, Amintor had gained the countenance and favour of Melantius, by the ardent and admiring delight with which he had never failed to greet him, on his return from any of his numerous successful expeditions. And since Amintor had grown to manhood, his noble bearing under several of those trying events which occasionally agitate the court circle of an absolute King, had ripened the early liking of the rough soldier, into a

strict and settled feeling of personal regard and affection.

During the recent absence of Melantius with the army, Amintor had corresponded with him, and among other court news, told him of his love for the gentle Aspatia, only daughter of old Calianax, Governor of the citadel, and of his being accepted as her future husband. So that the tidings of the marriage of Amintor did not surprise Melantius; and he was pleased to hear of it, chiefly because he had not failed to perceive the variable character of the young lord's mind, and he believed that such a union would contribute, more than anything else could, to settle his friend's thoughts and views into that only course which he considered they could fitly and honourably occupy,—namely, the pursuit of military glory and renown.

We have said that Melantius arrived from the army on the very day of Amintor's marriage. He was standing in one of the halls of the palace, listening to the greetings and congratulations of the courtiers on his return, and also to this piece of great court news, which at the moment occupied all their thoughts, and which even they, courtiers as they were, could not help mixing up with their professed delight at the still greater novelty, of the arrival of so distinguished and highly favoured a personage as they all felt Melantius to be;—when the beautiful Aspatia entered the hall alone, and was passing silently across it towards the opposite side.

Melantius immediately left the group of gay flutterers who had gathered round him, and went up to the maiden, with an air of mingled tenderness and homage which was not habitual with him, even in the presence of the highest and brightest of the court beauties, but which the touching gentleness and grace of Aspatia never failed to call forth where it existed, and to create where it did not, in all who addressed her. Besides which, he felt that he was addressing

the chosen wife of his own chosen friend, and on the day of her marriage,—that day on which a youthful maiden seems to bear about with her an atmosphere of mysterious sanctity which profane thoughts dare not approach, and which, to all but profane ones, communicates something of its own divine character.

Aspatia stopped when she saw Melantius coming towards her, and cast her (till then) steadfast eyes upon the ground. Melantius was not a very shrewd interpreter of ladies looks; and even if he had been, there was a depth of feminine softness about the character of Aspatia, which gave something of a pathetic expression even to her most unpremeditated smiles; but which, when she did not smile, cast a shade of sweet sadness over her face, more touching, and even more capable of inspiring a grave joy into the heart of the beholder, than her smile itself. So that in the downcast look, the immoveable features, and the serene and self-involved air of Aspatia, Melantius did not

perceive anything peculiarly inappropriate to her character, of a new-made bride: though it did strike him as something inappropriate to that character, or at least inconsistent with the forms which attend it in the precincts of a court, that the bearer of it should be thus pacing an open hall of the palace, on the day of her nuptials.

Melantius, however, knew but little about these matters, and cared less; so he at once stepped up to the object of his attention,—who stood before him as still, and almost as pale, as a marble statute,—and after a short pause, he addressed her as follows:—

"Will the Lady Aspatia permit a rough soldier,—the friend of her lord, and who loves him with an affection that only mature age can feel, and extreme youth inspire,—will she permit him at once to thank her for the happiness she is about to confer, and congratulate her on that which she must receive, in this happy union? The lady Aspatia may believe Melantius when

he says, that even if the beauty and the virtues of his own sister, the bright Evadue, had been put in competition with those of her who now hears him, and the choice had been left to her brother's determination, Amintor would still have been, as he is now, the husband of Aspatia: for Melantius holds the ties of friendship to be more sacred than those of blood, and he believes that, as none but the noble Amintor was a fit mate for the gentle Aspatia, so none but she could have made him happy. May that union last as long as it continues a blessing; and may its fruits be a race of soldiers, such as I now hope to see their sire!"

During the first portion of this address Aspatia lifted up her eyes, and let them rest upon the face of Melantius, with an expression of half-indifferent inquiry. But when he named Amintor as her husband, the blood rushed into her hitherto pale cheeks, and she turned aside her head, and her whole frame shook where she stood.—The last phrase of his address seemed to

recall her to herself, and restore at once her wonted calmness. She lifted herself up to her full height; looked him in the face for a moment; and then said, with a firm but sad voice, which went to the heart of Melantius, he knew not why,—

"When Aspatia possessed the noble Amintor's love, she was only thankful for it, not proud of it; she does not, therefore, deserve the Lord Melantius' irony and scorn, for having lost it."

Saying this, she passed across the hall, and disappeared; leaving Melantius in no pleasing perplexity, as to the meaning of her words.

They were soon explained to him, by the courtiers whom he had left, to address her.

- "Did you not tell me," said he, "that Amintor was this day married?"
 - "Yes," they said.
- "And did not his own letters," continued he, "received when I was at Patria, tell me that his hand was contracted to Aspatia?"

It was so, they said, but the contract had been suddenly broken off; and Amintor had this day married, under the express auspices of the King himself, the bright and high-thoughted Evadne, sister of Melantius. They added, that so far as the King had taken part in it, the marriage had been brought about as a pleasurable surprise to Melantius on his return; as the King was aware of his devoted affection for Amintor, and moreover not ignorant of a quarrel which existed between the former and old Calianax, father of the lady to whom Amintor had been first affianced.

Melantius was too well pleased (however astonished) at this new arrangement, to permit his thoughts to dwell for any length of time on the fickleness of his young friend, and its fatal consequences to Aspatia; though he was too generous not to deeply lament the hasty error which had made him seem to cast words of scorn upon the sorrows of the forsaken lady. And just as some of the courtiers were beginning to

relate to him the effects which those sorrows had produced upon her conduct and character, Amintor himself entered, to greet his friend ou his so happy return.

CHAPTER II.

We will suppose the mutual explanations between Amintor and Melantius made and received; and the masque performed to which they were presently summoned, and which had been prepared in honour of this great marriage; and the banquet which followed it concluded; and the guests retired to their respective homes—all except those ladies of the court who were to be attendant on the bride, in her bridal chamber.

Among these was Aspatia herself,—who moved there, sad and pale, as the moon when she dares to walk the heavens in the presence of her bright rival the sun.

That Aspatia did not refuse to be present on

this (to her) trying occasion, was of a piece with the rest of her conduct since the transfer of Amintor's affections from herself to Evadne. Immediately on recovering from the first momentary pang caused by the knowledge of her loss, she seemed to put on, as a garment, a kind of fantastical sorrow;-to hug her new grief to her heart, as a young mother does the child of ber shame, -loving it the more for the misery it must cost her;—to doat over and dally with the various thoughts and images that the recollection of her perished hopes was perpetually calling up, till she seemed to change the aspect of them all, by looking on them through her voluntary tears, and could half-fancy herself surrounded by a pomp of sadly sweet promises, more welcome than those which she had just seen burst into nothing before her eyes.

Above all, she was fond of brooding over the feeling of her own constancy: for Amintor had been able to take from her his love alone, not here from him. And she would sit for hours

together, among her maidens, singing aloud to them snatches of old ditties, and telling them fragments of antique tales, the burthens of which were, the imperishable love of forsaken lovers, and the sweet duty of dying for those who have ceased to live for us.

Such is the gentle creature who is now to assist in ushering into the arms of Amintor—of her Amintor (for she has felt him to be more than ever hers, since she has ceased to be his),—a lady who is above her in wealth and station, and brighter at least, if not lovelier, in beauty; but, oh! how poor (she thinks) compared with her, in that all-sufficing love for her Lord, without which beauty is a bauble, wealth a weight, and state and station stumbling-blocks in the path of wedded happiness! Behold her, where she moves to and fro meekly, in the bridal chamber of the proud Evadne; uttering no word of sorrow or complaint, until the empty jests of her light companions call upon her to speak; and then, discoursing as openly of her love as if she were

alone in her closet, communing with her own full heart:—for those who love as this lady did, care not if all the world know it,—especially when it is not returned: for when it is returned, a full-thoughted ease of heart possesses them, and they are content to broad silently over their great bliss. It were a strange contradiction indeed to the sweet instincts of its nature (the very essence of which is its utter want of all selfishness) if a virgin heart were to glory only in bartering itself away at the price of another heart, and be ashamed of giving itself freely, "without money and without price!"

Such a heart was not Aspatia's. She felt the sorrow of her loss more deeply than anything but silence could tell. But she was even garrulous in her grief, whenever it gave her occasion for speaking of her own great love. And when the cold and careless Evadne taxed her with looking sad in the midst of smiles, her reply was.—

It were a timeless smile should prove my cheek:

It were a fitter hour for me to laugh

When at the altar the religious priest

Were pacifying the offended Powers

With sacrifice, than now. This should have been

My night, and all your hands have been employed

In giving me, a spotless offering,

To young Amintor's bed,—as we are now

For you. Pardon, Evadne—'would my worth

Were great as yours, or that the King, or he,

Or both, thought so! Perhaps he found me worthless.

But, 'till he did so, in these ears of mine,

These credulous ears, he pour'd the sweetest words

That art or love could frame.''

Having duly prepared all things in the bridal chamber, for the reception of Amintor, the bride-maidens at length left it, each with a smiling "good night!" to the bride; and Aspatia, in addition, pronounced a solemn blessing upon her—bidding her love her lord no worse than she did, and begging of the gods that no discontent might ever grow between them.

She then left the chamber, with a kind of

triumphant sadness upon her brow, and an earnest gravity in her mien,—as if she felt that she was stepping out of life into death, a willing sacrifice at the altar of imperishable love. But there was still an unsettled something about her air, which seemed to indicate that she had not yet completed the task she had set herself to perform.

This was explained when she met the bridegroom in the antechamber, as her companions (who had quitted the bride before her) were leading him in.

"Go," said she to him, (taking his hand within both of hers,)—

"Go, and be happy in your lady's love!

May all the wrongs that you have done to me

Be utterly forgotten in my death!

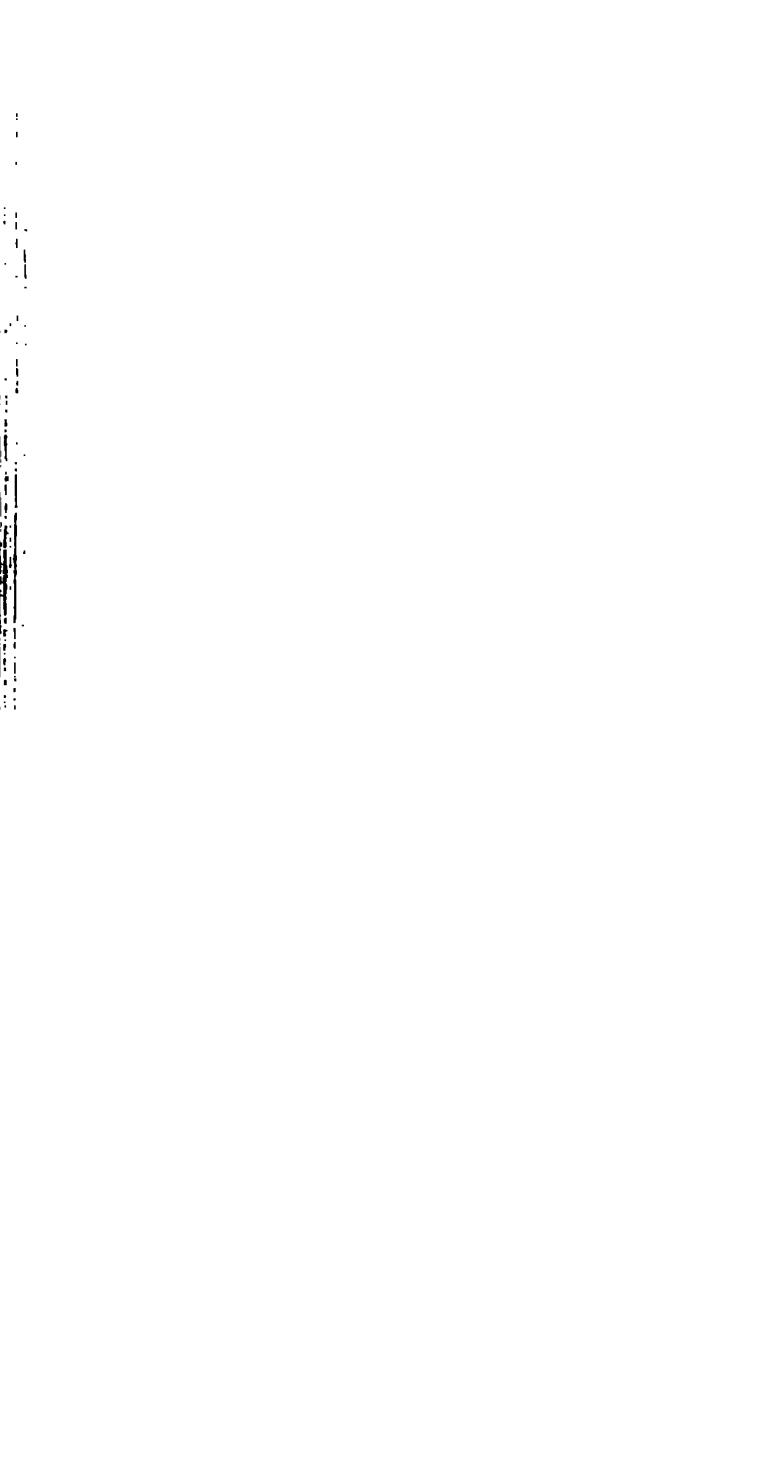
I'll trouble you no more. Yet I will take

A parting kisa, and will not be deny'd."

Here she raised her lips towards his, and he bent down his face towards her—seemingly shaken with a new and strange emotion—and received her proffered kiss. She then continued, after a moment's pause, during which she looked steadfastly in his face,—

"You'll come, my Lord, and see the virgins weep,
When I am laid in earth, though you yourself
Can know no pity.—Thus I wind myself
Into this willow garland, and am prouder
That I was once your love, though now refused,
Than to have had another true to me.
So with my prayers I leave you."

So saying, and not waiting for a word in reply, she at once departed.



CHAPTER III.

AMINIOR passed into the chamber of Evadne with wet eyes, and a soul labouring with the sudden weight of thoughts that would not be controuled, even by those which beckoned him forward. The grief of Aspatia seemed to pierce into him, deeper and deeper, at every step he took towards what had till this moment seemed the haven of his hopes; and he stood still for an instant, and trembled like a self-convicted culprit.

Ill betides the bridal couch that is so approached!

Evadne met him in the midst of her chamber, and her bright presence at once put to flight all his momentary fears and misgivings. He advanced towards her with an air of triumphant joy, and was about to lead her away into the dim recesses of the stately apartment,—when, gazing into her proud eyes, to seek for a fitting answer to his own tumultuous thoughts, he beheld them fixed as the stars above, and as cold; while round her mouth, and in her whole demeanour, there was a look of settled scorn, that seemed as if it could not pass away.

"What is this?" said he, after a moment's pause—"what looks are these, for such a time and such a place? Or does my beautiful Evadne clothe the sun of her beauty in these momentary clouds, only that it may seem the brighter when she casts them off? It needs not. My poor vision could scarce bear its beams, when they were chastened by all maidenish thoughts. But now—when Love and Hymen join to bid them burn!—Come!—Come!"

And he was again about to lead her away; but she stepped back from his approaching touch, and looking at him still more scornfully than before, motioned him from her silently, and then pointed to a seat that was near them.

"What is this, Evadne?" said he once more, with an air of half-playful, half-alarmed perplexity. "Is not this our bridal night? Or have I but dreamt my joys? Or do I dream them now—and shall I wake to find them shadows?"

She heard him silently, but with a bitter smile upon her lips; and as he once more approached her, she drew back, and for the first time spoke;—

"The lord Amintor has yet to learn whom he has wedded. He seems to think Evadne but another name for the humble and the wronged Aspatia. Let him know her better! True, she has stood at the altar with him, and the world has heard her proclaimed his bride. That she should be so was the will of one who may command the wills of all. She is the Lord Amintor's bride. Let him call and think her such, and be content. But let him keep his love

for those who seek it, and have love to give him back in barter. Evadne is not one of those."

Etterly confounded as Amintor was by this speech, and the manner in which it was promounced, he could not help feeling that there must be some concealed jest lurking beneath it; for Evadue had received his vows with as much gentleness as her haughty nature seemed capable of; and her dazzling beauties, added to the earnest interest which the King himself had seemed to take in the union, had prevented him from seeking to look very narrowly into the secret feelings of this proud lady, whom none but princes had hitherto dared to ask in marriage, and had asked in vain.

Still he had wooed her at the express instance of the King himself, and won her (seeming) free consent to his wishes. What could he think then of such words as these, uttered in a tone and with a look that froze the very blood in his veins? Wonder-stricker and perplexed as he was, he

still tried to rally his spirit for a reply, that should in some sort be answerable to the tone and tenor of her strange words.

The lady Evadne's tongue, I find, can pierce as deeply as her eyes. Her love-jests, if they were heard by other ears than mine, would sound like scornings. What! would she first give wings to my love, and then stop it midway in its mounting flight, and bid it fall headlong, ere it feels the full heat of those beams which called it into life? Would she——"

Here he paused for a moment; and then, breaking involuntarily into a frank and goodhumoured smile, continued in an altered tone,—

"Come, come, my beautiful Evadne! no more of this! It is our bridal night. No more words but one—and let not that be heard, even by ourselves. Let it be thought and felt alone. 'Love!' is the only sound should pass the lips of lovers, on the night that makes them one. We but affront the Power that spreads and sanctifies our bridal couch, if we delay to press

it when he gives us warrant. Come! why what a form is here! Kings might grow prouder on their painted thrones, by gazing on it merely;—but to clasp it thus, and call it mine!——"

Amintor scarcely perceived the triumphant smile that passed over the features of Evadne, as he pronounced the last portion of this passionate rhapsody; though he did observe the contemptuous frown into which that smile faded away, as he finished it, and was about to accompany it by the corresponding action in which his thoughts and words were losing themselves;—when Evadne, instead of receding from him as before, advanced a step or two to meet him, and with her stately head thrown back loftily, and her extended hand placed upon his breast, bade him "Forbear!"

"Forbear, and listen," said she; "but hear patiently, or not at all. If you stay or interrupt me by useless words, I am dumb; and you may learn your fate as best you can,—but not from me. I am thine, Amintor, and not thine—for I am not my own."

"What mean these idle riddles?" exclaimed he, impatiently: but she continued without seeming to hear him.

"Your King (and mine!) commanded me to wed you, and I have obeyed. Think yourself, then, Evadne's lord, and be content;—and in all outward seeming be her lord. The rites that gave her to you, gave you this—but they could not give her love, and shall not give that which (love away) were nameless infamy. I am your wife, Amintor, as far as laws and rites can make me such. But yonder couch, (call it not your bridal one—for it is not Aspatia's!)—yonder couch (I have sworn it—sworn it more deeply than your light thoughts can compass)—now that it is yours, cannot again be mine. I leave it to you, and depart. If you are wise, press it in silence, and be patient; and to-morrow, when you leave it, think yourself blest that you have pressed it alone."

Saying this, she was about to quit the cham-

ber by a side entrance, which led to another apartment; and had almost passed the door, hefore Amintor recovered from the stuper of amazement into which her speech—at once clear and mysterious—had thrown him. The sight of her stately form, as it was half disappearing from his view, roused him in a moment, and made him forget the strange import of her words, and remember only that he was about to lose her; and he rushed to her, and seizing her arm, drew her back into the chamber.

"Amintor," said she, "beware! The words that you have heard are final, and pronounced in mercy to you, not to her who uttered them. If these have wounded your peace, seek not to hear others that might—that must—destroy it for ever—but that must and shall be uttered, if you stay or trouble me further with your importunate love. Let me depart."

"Evadne," said he, as he continued unconsciously to grasp her wrist, and gaze upon her proud eyes—the fire of which seemed to glow more and more flercely every moment that he beld her—" Evadne—do you rave, or jest?"
What mockery is this?"

Again his wondering fears forsook him, and his fierce love returned; and he once more addressed her in tones of eager endearment:—

"Come, sweetest—enough of this coyish jesting. It cannot, and it need not, add to the flames that consume me. I burn—I die to clasp thee to my longing heart. The King, who gave thee to me, little thinks that I so ill deserve the proud gift, as to be dallying and delaying with it, in idle words. Come—let us to bed——"

At the name of the King she flung her arm from him, with a look of added disdain; and then, resuming a more dignified serenity of mien, exclaimed,—

- "Presumptuous fool! the King!"——
- She paused a moment; and then proceeded in a more subdued strain,—
- Amintor—you know not either the King,

or me, or yourself; and I would willingly have left you in your ignorance of each,—and left you blest in being so. You will not have it thus, Take, then, your choice, and know, that which, being known, must make you such as even I can pity, in the midst of my disdain."

He stood listening in silent wonder; and she continued:

"I told you that I do not love you. Think you it is because I do not love? I do, and am beloved, and glory in my love—ay—even now, that I am wedded to the man whom most I hate because I am wedded to him. You ask me why I wedded him? Because I love my fame only less than my love; and would give, and have given, all but that to diet it. Nay—be patient, and hear me! When I name the being who controuls my fate (and yours) you will perforce be so."

"Name him,"—exclaimed Amintor, fiercely,
—"Name him at once, and torture me no more
with thy strange, fatal words: Name him—that

I may shed his blood upon my shame, and hide it from my sight. Methinks, even if he were a god, I could assail him on his seat of light, and pluck him to the ground beneath my feet."

"He is a god,"—exclaimed Evadne, triumphantly, and no whit moved by the vehement raving of Amintor;—"He is a god, to thee!
You would not dare to touch him, though he were here before you—even here. Amintor, it is the King!"

Amintor staggered as if struck with a sudden blow, and sank into a seat that was near—all his limbs seeming at once to be unstrung, as if their vital powers had left them.

After a few moments, he began to recover the use of his faculties; and as he gradually lifted up his prone head from off his breast, on which it had sunk, he murmured to himself,—

"Aspatia!—Ah—my poor gentle, patient, wronged Aspatia! Was it for this—"

Here he opened the eyes he had for a moment closed; and as he beheld Evadne, all that he had

just heard second to such back upon his secon, as if it had been reathered.

"The King, Engine!—Oh—it is not the King!—my it is not."

"Amintor"—setorned she proudly, but with an air of calm self-countroul, which, however, it extends to demand all her efforts to preserve,—"Amintor, it is the King! Once more I hid you have me, and be patient. I am the King's, and he is mine—body and soul I am his. Need I then say I cannot, will not be another's—will not stoop to less than the greatest?——"

"But what demon "-interrupted Amintor
"put it in your thoughts to marry me?-or in
the King's to bid you?"

"I must be a wife, or be dishonoured. You sought me for one, and I am yours—sought me, who scorned you,—leaving one who lived but in your sight, and dies without you. Do not complain, then; since, in seeking mine own ends, I have but fulfilled those of justice. Now, once

more, let me depart. Keep your own counsel, and you are safe from that shame which cannot fall on you without reaching me."

So saying, she was about to quit him; but he exclaimed, eagerly—"Stay, Evadne!——"

He then paused, and a throng of contending thoughts and feelings seemed to pass across his brow, and agitate his whole frame. At length he said,—

"Is this true, Evadne?—.And does the King know that I know the foul dishonour he has cast upon me?"

She replied, "All the King knows or heeds is, that I have sworn myself his alone, and that I shall keep my oath."

"Then," said Amintor, slowly and solemnly, "one thing I charge thee, Evadne: Let him not know that I conceive he wrongs me. His name is as a spell even upon my thoughts—much more upon my words and deeds—and binds them in subjection to his will: but only while my name and fame are clear. I can bear

to be the thing he has made me, but not to seem it—even to him, in whose sight I am that thing. But if the world should know it—oh, Evadne—for his sake, and for thine own, if not for mine, ain secretly."

He paused, and then added—" One thing, at least, I thank thee for, knowing what I know: it joys me more to have missed my bridal joys, than it could to have compassed them, even had they realized my richest hopes. If I had not missed them, not all the reverential awe that springs within me at the name of Kana, nor all the love that I (still) bear to thee, had saved ye



L

when he was thus left alone in the chamber of Evadne, on the night of the day that he had stood at the altar with her, and heard the voices of assembled crowds proclaiming them one, chaunting congratulatory hymns in their ears, nd calling down blessings from the gods upon their lives and upon their bed—that bridal bed which the hands of beauty had decked for their delight, and which now stood before his glazed and half-senseless eyes, cold, empty, and un pressed? Who shall tell the thoughts and images that coursed each other through in burning brain, each obliterating that which preceded it—each bringing with it new pains—and each leaving behind it indelible traces of its deadly course? Who shall tell this?—None: for none—not even he himself—could remember for a moment after—much less imagine—the details of his great misery. Suffice it that one image—that of Aspatia—predominated over all, and preserved its place distinctly, when all the rest were blending and shifting among each

VOL. II.

other, like motes in a sun-beam. Which way soever his mental vision turned, there he beheld her, moving along meekly, amid the host of adverse images that were pressing tumultuously about her—with her eyes for ever fixed upon the ground, as if in search of her grave!

For a space Amintor sat silently, in the middle of Evadue's chamber, wholly possessed by the thoughts and images that his mingled disappointment, shame, and remorse, kept momentarily conjuring up; -- possessed by them, but not possessing them,-for they came and went without his being able to exercise the slightest controul over them, or even to distinguish them one from another: till at length his faculties, wearied and exhausted by their perpetual yet unsuccessful efforts to reduce to something like order this chaos of contending powers, sank into a scarcely less wearying slumber; from which he was only awakened by the light of the morning sun, that seemed to shine in upon him in mockery and scorn.

CHAPTER IV.

LET us leave Amintor to his woes for a while, and turn to the gentle Aspatia. She little thought of the deep and deadly vengeance that awaited her wrongs, as she quitted the chamber of the proud Evadne,—her lips quivering with a bitter joy, at the first and last kiss that they had impressed on the lips of her heart's lord.

It is well she did not; for it would have troubled the serenity of her sweet sorrow, and made the sacrifice she contemplated less pure.

On quitting the chamber of Evadne, and reaching her own, there was no tumultuous confusion in her thoughts—no impatient recalling of past feelings and images—no idle conjuring

up of the ghosts of buried hopes—nothing to disturb that almost death-like tranquillity which seemed to tell beforehand of the grave to which it tended. And when her maidens came about her, to utter their vain condolencies on her cause of grief, or their still vainer attempts to turn saide or stay the course of it, she did but dwell upon it the more deeply and intently.

Instead of permitting them (as they would fain have done) to assume, in order to dispel her sadness, an air of gaiety which they felt not, she made them put on a mimic grief, that they might thus more aptly shadow forth the desolation in which she seemed to luxuriate. And when she felt that they could not look sorrowful enough to satisfy her doating fancy, she chid them, in words the very music of which might have steeped in melancholy the spirit of joy itself:—

"Away—you are not sad—force it no further.

Alas, poor wenches!

Go, learn to love first; learn to lose yourselves;

Learn to be flatter'd, and believe, and bless

The double tongue that did it. Make a faith

Out of the miracles of ancient lovers,

Such as spake truth, and died in it; and like me,

Believe all faithful, and be miserable."

One of her maidens she set to personify the sad traditions of her country—calling up in her the semblance, first of one, and then of another as her changing fancies served:—

"That downcast of thine eye, Olimpias,
Shows a fine sorrow. Mark Antiphila;
Just such another was the nymph Ænone,
When Paris brought home Helen.—Now, a tear;
And then thou art a piece fully expressing
The Carthage queen, when, from a cold sea-rock,
Full with her sorrow, she tied fast her eyes
To the fair Trojan's ships; and, having lost them,
Just as thine eyes do now, down stole a tear.
What would this wench do, if she were Aspatia?
Here she would stand, 'till some more pitying god
Turned her to marble.'

Then she would make another of her maidens sketch forth a picture of the trusting and for-

saken Ariadne; and not finding it, when done, answerable to her own passionate conception of the scene, would have it drawn over again from herself:—

"Fie! you have miss'd it here, Antiphils. You are much mistaken, wench : These colours are not dull and pale enough To show a soul so full of misery As this sad lady's was. Do it by me-Do it again, by me, the lost Aspatia; And you shall find all true but the wild island. Suppose I stand upon the sea-beach now, Mine arms thus, and mine hair blown by the wind: Wild as that desert; and let all about me Tell that I am forsaken. Do my face (If thou hadst ever feeling of a sorrow) Thus, thus, Antiphila: strive to make me look Like Sorrow's monument; and the trees about me, Let them be dry and leafless; let the rocks Groen with continual surges; and behind me, Make all a desolation."

Thus did Aspatia doat over her sad fate, and take a wayward delight in clustering about it all the pomp and pageantry of grief which the poets of her land had connected with their stories of false men and forsaken ladies. Thus did she as it were prepare the way beforehand—strewing it all over with funereal flowers—which was to lead to her low grave—that grave which she was already tenanting in fancy, and which she now coveted, with something of that tender and mysterious yearning, with which she had lately looked forward to what should have been her bridal bed.

Yet she would not approach the one precipitately or irreverently, any more than she would have done the other, nor without that calm composure, and gentle sense of propriety, which formed the essence of her sweet nature. She had long since numbered her hours, and allotted to each its task of preparation; and now that she saw the end of them at hand, her heart felt lighter and lighter by every one that passed away; and she dismissed her maidens, and laid down to sleep for the last time, as if her deadly

sorrow was but a thing of fancy, and the detail of her wrongs a story that she had listened to with tears of sympathy, and then wiped her eyes, and dismissed it from her thoughts for

Aspatia slept that night a dreamless sleep, and woke (not as heretofore) without wishing that the day were done.

CHAPTER V.

MEANWHILE Amintor left the chamber of Evadne, laden, even to sinking, with sick thoughts, which the buoyant air into which he stepped forth seemed but to press the more closely about his heart, and make it labour and struggle beneath them the more tempestuously.

He was alone and unobserved; and he issued from the palace at once, and, without knowing whither his steps were leading him, wandered instinctively towards a beautiful grove near the sea-shore, where he had of late been used to indulge in his day-dreams of that coming delight which yesterday was to have consummated. The early sun shone upon him as he

walked, and the tender blue of the sky smiled serenely down upon him, and the sea breeze blew softly and wooingly upon his bent brow and burning eyelids, and the branches of the trees sighed and whispered to each other like lovers, and the birds flitted about among them like the spirits of the place.

At first Amintor neither knew nor felt anything of all this,—self-absorbed as he was in the fatal change which one hour had produced within him. But the sights and sounds that come to us from the external world, and the corresponding emotions which they naturally and therefore necessarily excite within us, will not long be overlooked or disregarded. Within the gloomy walls of a prison, or the glittering ones of a palace, we may dwell interminably on one set of emotions, and ponder for ever on one source of joy or of woe. But in the presence of Nature this cannot be. We may absent ourselves from her: but if once we come fairly face to face with her, she will not long be denied her

there in our thoughts and feelings. And though it depends not either upon her or ourselves, of what that share shall consist, or whether it shall be for good or for evil, yet be it must.

And thus it was with Amintor. For a few moments after sallying forth from the chamber of Evadne, he was as utterly self-absorbed and unconscious of all external things, as if he had still been standing there, listening to the words that told his strange fate. But when he felt the breath of heaven about him, and saw the sunshine glittering in a gorgeous line of light upon the ocean that lay before him, and heard the eternal sound of the waters breaking upon the strand, and mingling their now gentle whispers with those of the leaves above his head, he felt his grief changed in character at least, if not relieved. It had till now lain concentrated within his own breast, and burned there like a slow-consuming fire. But now, it seemed in an instant to start into active life, like the same fire when blown upon by a sharp wind, and

all his faculties and powers, and make them all agents and aliments to its newly-awakened wants and capacities. With the change that had taken place within him, all external things were changed; and as he had yesterday seen reflections and repetitions of his own bliss in the blissful beauty which Nature had everywhere spread about in that delicious land, so to-day the detp shadows of his own grief and shame and disappointment—each rendered deeper by the stain of remorse that blended with it—not merely blinded his sight to all beauty, but transformed it to the likeness and endued it with the qualities of its most baneful opposite.

Amintor wandered on wildly, quickening his pace, as if he fancied that he could leave his thoughts behind him, and take refuge from them in the beautiful sights and sounds that he looked for at a distance, only because he missed them nere, where he had hitherto been accustomed to seek and to find them; and where assuredly he

would have found them, whatever had been his grief, if remorse had not mingled with it. But now, the shadow of Aspatia seemed to float before his eyes every time he lifted them from the earth, to look around him; and the solemn kiss that her cold lips had yesternight impressed upon his, seemed to return upon them, with a chill that pierced downward to his very heart; and echoes and images of the wrongs he had done to her, and was suffering under himself, seemed to come crowding about him, till he felt impeded by them in his progress onward, as if each had a bodily presence.

At length he stopped; he paused for a few moments, as if considering the course he should take; and then, without seeming to withdraw his attention from the imaginary objects which absorbed it, he retraced his steps towards the palace.

In returning thither, Amintor's thoughts reassumed for a while a more healthful course, in considering what it became him to do, under the

extraordinary circumstances in which he found himself. But the result of that consideration cast him into a still more appalling perplexity than before. Was he to become the pandar to his own shame and grief, by bearing them silently? Or was he to proclaim them to the world, and so become the open mockery of his enemies, and the pretended pity of his friends? As for revenging them, his superstitious reverence for the name and person of his King was such, that the mere sight of the one, or sound of the other, was sufficient to banish all tendency towards that mode of assuaging his sorrows, and restoring his honour to that proud seat from which he felt that it had fallen for ever. He would as soon have thought of taking vengeance of the eternal gods, for doing their sacred wills upon him.

And then Aspatia:—the treasure of true faith that he once possessed in her, and had so madly and pitilessly cast away—was he to resign it for ever, while it was yet in sight, and at the very moment when he had become sensible of its inestimable value? Last, but not lowest in this turmoil of contending thoughts that beset Amin tor, was his friendship for Melantius: and how was he either to conceal from, or confess to him, the tale of shame and grief that touched them both with equal nearness—or rather that would pierce Melantius doubly—in his own person, and in his friend's?

In the midst of self-questionings like these Amintor reached the palace, and found the courtiers already assembled, in little knots, all happy in the new subject for gay trifling which the past day had furnished to them, and each ready with some significant nothing, either of word, or look, or gesture, to greet him as he passed among them. Most of them were too inobservant, or too occupied with their own light thoughts, to remark the distracted trouble that dwelt in the eyes of Amintor, and broke out every moment in his haggard face and unconscious air, as he moved among them as if spell-bound, and

answered their several greetings as if they had been addressed to him in a strange tongue. And those who did observe the fearful alteration which had taken place in his whole appearance and manner since yesterday, only made it the occasion of some silly jest, that did not pierce into his heart like a secret dagger, only because his distracted thoughts prevented him from understanding its import.

There was one, however, who looked at Amintor with a different eye, and the sight of whom recalled his wandering thoughts from the wild pilgrimage they were making into the past and the future, and fixed them in an instant to the central point of their present and immediate misery; as the spear of the hunter pins the flying deer to the ground, and brings about it in a moment its whole train of relentless pursuers.

Nothing quickens the senses like true affection; there is no deceiving the eye of one who loves us. Melantius met Amintor as he was passing hastily and suddenly out

that something fatal had befallen his friend; while the sight of Melantius at once concentrated the (till then) scattered thoughts and emotions of Amintor, and forced him to make a desperate effort to conceal the tenor of them. He therefore put on an air of forced and unnatural gaiety, which, instead of dissipating, did but the more fully confirm the fears of Melantius.

The first suspicion that came across Melantius pointed at the wronged Aspatia,—of whose deadly grief, and her meek and gentle bearing under it, he had heard much since his return—more than enough to disturb and trouble the unmingled satisfaction he had at first felt in this new marriage. He feared—or rather his frank and good-natured pity for Aspatia made him almost hope—that Amintor's conscience had awakened him to a bitter sense of the woes he had cast upon that sweet-spirited lady; and he began to doubt the happy issue of a union which was

X

VOL. II.

founded in falsebood, and the first fruits of which threatened remorae on one hand, and death on the other.

But thoughts of this kind were presently hanished from the mind of Melantius, by the fearful and growing trouble which seemed to absorb that of Amintor; and which his knowledge of human nature assured him, could not proceed from any cause but some real and active one, pressing immediately and urgently upon the sufferer himself. All his almost parental affection for Amintor, therefore, came into play at once; and he determined to learn the cause of his grief, whatever it might be. He little thought what awaited himself in doing so!

"Amintor," said he,—after having drawn him apart, and made several ineffectual attempts to lead him indirectly into a confession of what troubled him,—"Amintor, this is not well; it is unworthy of yourself and of me; or rather, it is unworthy the friendship and affection that should make us one. I looked to have met you

with the spirit of love speaking and sparkling in your eyes, and with a solemn and sober, because an accomplished bliss, seated in triumph upon your brow. So should have appeared the husband of Evadne—of Melantius' sister—on the morning following the night that made him blest. Instead, I find him with a face picturing forth strange troubles—with an eye dim and sunken, as if from feverish unrest—a brow laden with heavy shadows, that seem to press into it like substances—an air by turns distracted and depressed—and a tongue mocking all these, by its vain attempt to conceal them beneath words of seeming indifference or merriment. Amintor, there is some secret grief upon you."

"None,—none,"—said Amintor, hastily and eagerly.—"None."

"There is," continued Melantius, "and I must know it—I must—for it must needs be a fatal one, to stir and change you thus, at such a time as this. What is it?"

"There is nothing," said Amintor, with a

forced composure of manner, and motioning as if to depart. "Evadne has not yet left her chamber. I go to seek, and bring her to you."

And he was about to quit Melantius without more words; but the latter held his arm, and stayed him.

"Amintor," said he, with a solemn earnestness which he had not before assumed, "what is there that I would not have told to you? I would have confessed my secret sins to you—even my sins of thought—if you had so sought to know them as I now seek to know the cause that casts this strange trouble over you."

"Melantius," exclaimed Amintor, in a voice faltering with inward passion, "Melantius—" Then, after an effort to rally his thoughts to the point of resolute secrecy, from which the words and manner of Melantius had for a moment shaken them, he added, in a tone of comparative self-possession,—" My friend, there is nothing—or if there be, nothing that should trouble or

invade your peace. The truth is, I hear strange stories bruited about the court, touching the sorrows (deadly, they say) of a gentle maiden, between whom and myself there existed ties—suffice it that they were broken by mutual consent; and that I am now—that I must now—"

Again he faltered, and hesitated, but in a moment after resumed, though in an eager and hurried tone,—

"In short, the idle talking of the court, and its strange tales touching the late bearing of old Calianax's daughter, have troubled me with fears and fancies, bred perchance only by my own busy vanity. This is all, believe me."

Amintor looked keenly at Melantius as he said this, and clearly perceived that he was still dissatisfied; whereupon, as if by an unconscious effort of his will, he seemed to lash and scourge his thoughts to a pitch of almost insane exultation, as he exclaimed triumphantly, but yet with

a bitter irony blending with the unnatural tone of his shrill voice,—

What can there be? Am I not beloved through all this island? Does not the King rain favours on me? Do I not owe it to him that the noble Evadne—beautiful as noble, and virtuous as beautiful—graces my poor bed? What should there be to trouble me?—I am light as air—the blood dances through my veins like wine—I could leap and shout for joy!——"

"Amintor," interrupted Melantius, in a tone of mingled sorrow and severity, "the eye and ear of a friendship like mine cannot be deceived, even if they would. Every word you utter is belied by the look that comes with it, and the voice that gives it sound. Something there is—and something fatal—that you would hide from me,—from all—but most of all from me—from me, your friend and brother. Well—let it be so-I have done. More words were vain. But let

me say, that when Amintor seeks such a friend a Melantius was, (and he needs such an onc—now, now, more than ever,) he may perchance not find him. Farewell!—I would fain tear you at once from my bosom!—but it will not be. You have grown there too long to be plucked away in a moment. But the roots are cut, and the plant must wither. Farewell—fickle, and false, and wayward!—May Evadne know better how to keep your faith, than I have done your friend-ship! Farewell."

As Melantius spoke, Amintor seemed gradually sinking into a paroxysm of passionate grief, which reached its utmost depth at these last words.

"Stay!" he exclaimed, as Melantius was departing,—"Stay, Melantius—you shall knowall;
—you ought and shall. Oh! Melantius—sorrows, strange and nameless, compass me about,
and blast me where I stand. Melantius, I am
lost—lost to my fame and country—lost to
myself, to thee, to all.—Evadne—."

Here he paused for a few moments; and his friend's attention, which had been absorbed in a sort of vague wonder at his words, seemed to be directed at once to a specific point, and to be increased in eager intensity, as he pronounced the name of Evadne;—while Amintor, without observing him, continued,—

"Melantius, thy sister is—thy sister has—

Again he paused and faltered, and his face underwent fearful changes; till, at last, his faculties seemed suddenly to give way, and fall precipitate from the artificial height to which they had been forced, and his whole frame bent and cowered beneath the throng of thoughts and feelings that all at once came pressing upon him; and he fell upon Melantius' neck, and wept aloud. Then, as suddenly recovering momentary possession of himself, he exclaimed, in a hurried tone,—

"Melantius, urge me no further. My griefs cannot be told—they scarcely can be borne—and

yet they must: but to tell them!—and to thee!

Oh—leave me!—in pity leave me!"

Melantius was obeying the desire of Amintor at once, and without a word, but with a look of deep and keen reproach, that pierced into his friend's heart like a sharp instrument, and shook its purpose into air once more.

"Well, well," exclaimed he,—following and staying Melantius—"it shall be told. But when it is told, let me depart, and look on me no more."

Then, summoning a desperate resolution, he added, in a deep and solemn, but trembling and passion-stricken voice,—

"Melantius—thy sister is—Evadne is—a harlot!"

For Melantius to start from the spot where he stood, as if smitten by a sudden blow—to seize his sword, and rush upon Amintor, with eyes flashing fire—to pause on reaching and seeing him sink at his feet, like a victim willing to meet the blow of the sacrificer—and then to step back and resume his self-possession:—all this did not occupy the time that is required to tell it.

"Amintor," said he, calmly, and with a look of deep commiseration, "my dear Amintor—something I see has befallen, to shake your very reason from its seat. Once more let me say, know me for your friend, and trust me. Whatever it be, it cannot be without a remedy. Let the madness you uttered but now be as nothing. I heard—or heeded it not. Once more, confide in your friend."

Amintor interrupted him, with a determined and desperate haste of manner, as if resolute to execute his purposes of disclosure at once, lest his present will to do so might fail him for

"Melantius, in my turn let me say—hear me! What I have uttered—fearful as it is for both of us—is true. Evadue is a wanton. The King! the King! it is the King's work. He it is who has betrayed, dishonoured, destroyed us. Nay,

must—nay, you must—for it befits not that a shame like this should lie upon us unrequited. And yet for me to requite it!—think of who they are that have thus struck our honours down, and trampled and defaced them! One the King,—a name the very sound of which, uttered by my own lips, sends awe into my soul, and bids it bend and bow beneath his will. The other, my friend's sister—nay, more—queen of my thoughts, and mistress of my heart: the being on whom—"

Here he stopped suddenly, for the looks and gestures of Melantius recalled Amintor's thoughts from the course into which they were wandering; and he resumed his disclosure of what had taken place on the past night.

"Melantius, hear me and interrupt me not.

Last night, when the maidens of the court—

(Aspatia was among them!)—when they ushered

me to Evadne's chamber, she came to me, not

like a bride or mistress, but clad in a queen-

like state, that awed and chilled, while it inspired and lifted me above myself, to think that she was mine. I approached, and would have sealed my claim to her, first by a reverent kiss, but she repulsed me, coldly at first, then houghtily;—and when I——"

A sudden emotion here seemed to seize upon him; and after a moment's pause he continued, in a hurried and still more agitated manner,—

"But what needs this record and repetition of my shame!—The very words in which I would tell it seem to cleave and blast me, before I utter them. Suffice it, Melantius, that she spurned my offered homage—despised my love—contemned my claims upon her—and at last boldly avowed—nay, gloried in her guilty passion for another—for the King!—and in the means which they had taken, in our marriage, to conceal the shame that must else have fallen on her. And then, bidding me at my peril keep my own counsel, left me in proud

disdain, as if she were the injured one, I the guilty."

During the utterance of this disclosure, Melantius stood gazing on Amintor, silent and motionless,—a strange fire burning within his eyes, but his lips compressed, and his whole frame stiffened and rigid, as if from some internal effort to controul or direct his emotions. When Amintor ended, Melantius stood thus for a few moments, gazing as if into his very soul; and then he said,—

"Amintor, this is true which you have told me—I see it is, and do not bid you confirm it to me with an oath. Strange and impossible as it would seem to thought, I see that it is true—I see it in the wreck and ruin it has wrought upon you. Now, Amintor, hear me. Has thy friendship for Melantius survived that wreck? It has—I see it has. Then promise me one thing,—never to stir in this affair without my knowledge and counsel—never to even meditate revenge, till——"

"Oh, my friend," interrupted Amintor, feebly and mournfully, as if all his manhood had fortaken him, and with it all his late rage and indignation, and nothing was left to him but impotent sorrow;—"Oh, my friend, there is little need to bid me promise this. Revenge! If I could even meditate on vengeance, I were not the wretched thing I am. To revenge our wrongs, is in some sort to requite and cast them off. That I cannot do this—dare not, and would not if I dared—is the deepest and deadliest of all the wrongs I suffer and sink under. Talk not—nay, think not of it, Melantius! do but think who it is that has heaped this hill of fire upon our heads. It is the King!"

"Well, well," said Melantius, with a slight hurry of tone and manner, which seemed to bespeak a wish to hide the tenor of his thoughts—"Well, well, be it so! it is best. Go in, Amintor. Collect your thoughts, and school them into patience. Something may yet be done. Confide in me. For the present I leave

you. But remember, Amintor, our friendship still survives: nothing can touch that. We still live for each other. Remember, too," he added after a moment's pause, as if to consider whether he should say more or not;—"Remember, too, that Aspatia still lives, and loves you. What, man! never let your proud soul sink prone to the earth. This island is not the world. There may still be a way to fling these sorrows from us, and be ourselves again."

So saying, he left Amintor abruptly, the utter prostration of his mind and heart increased rather than lessened, by this recalling to them of a name which, in imaging forth what he might have been, did but the more darkly shadow the picture of what he was.

CHAPTER VI.

From the first instant that Melantius heard and believed the tale which his friend had just related to him, his course was irrevocably taken; and nothing remained but to choose the path by which he should pursue it. He clearly perceived, too, that the indecision of character which was the chief and besetting weakness of his friend, must prevent him from taking any part in that course. On leaving Amintor, therefore, he at once cast away from him all considerations, but those which tended immediately to the accomplishment of his purpose of revenge. His fame was forgotten; his friendship for Vol. 11.



goading him on, to the atta which he seemed to see before object.

But with all the emoti Melantius, there was mixed up to attain his object, and the tion in the pursuit of it. revenge, to be revenge, must that which is purchased at the the risk, of our own destruct an empty image, but an insum the substance, and such as a may compass. Such a revenge

undaunted courage, had gained him his present fame and honours—seemed to promise him all that he sought.

On quitting Amintor, Melantius retired to his own apartment; and, when there, at once reassumed that inflexible calcuness of demeanour which even the fatal disclosures of the morning had but for a moment disturbed; and he addressed his whole soul to the great end which was now to absorb it. "The King must die." That was the theme which was to fill and occupy his whole thoughts, and mould and move all his actions, until it was accomplished. He must die openly, in the eye of all the world, and in express and proclaimed expiation of the crime he had committed. Moreover, he must know and feel that he was so dying, and that the doer of this great act of justice was to answer it only as such. This would indeed be revenge; but nothing less than this.

But how was this just revenge to be attained?

The King was absolute in his power; and the

guards and retainers of the court were devoted to him.

Melantius, as he walked to and fro in his apartment, thought steadily on these things for a while, and as calmly as if he had merely been taking counsel of himself, on some point of his public duty. He then seated himself for a brief space;—but still no expression, but one of deep thought, moved or marked his marble features.

At length, he lifted himself up proudly from his posture of reflection; a half smile, as if of internal triumph, passed over his countenance, and then it seemed at once to settle into that look of deep and severe repose which indicated that his purposes were finally taken; and he issued from the palace, and directed his steps towards the Citadel of which Calianax was governor.

Since the late fantasy (to him so strange and mad in its results) which had taken possession of his daughter, Calianax had grown ten times more wayward and tetchy than he had always been; and in particular, the dislike arising out of his old quarrel with Melantius had assumed more asperity than ever, since the fatal union of Amintor with Evadne; a union which he could not but attribute to the influence of her brother, both with the King and with Amintor. So that even the devoted attachment and reverence of Calianax for the King himself, could scarcely restrain him from flinging words of insult at Melantius, in the very presence of the former,—where alone they ever met. Yet it was Calianax whom Melantius now went to seek; for through his means alone could his projects of revenge terminate successfully.

"Well," exclaimed Melantius, in a tone of good-humoured raillery, on meeting Calianax, who was descending the steps towards the outer gate of the Fortress, just as Melantius was entering it to seek him—"Well, Calianax, is our old feud forgotten? Has not the poor service I have done the state wiped away the remembrance of it? It had need; for I come

to beg a bost of your-and a great one ten-anless than that you give up your office to me." He proved a motorit, and then added, walnut any marked conjugate on the wards,—" I would half the King; and I cannot do it addity without having pomention of this Fortness. What says California?—Will be yield it to me quickly? or most I by siege to it—(the first it has ever coffered in his hands)—a siege of wit—and wife it from him whether he will or no?"

"He is mad"—thought Calianax to himself—eyeing him from head to foot. "His successes have turned his brain. Let's hear if he'll repeat this. Fewer words than these have stopped the breath of greater men than he. This were indeed a dainty way to acquit myself of all the injuries he has done to me, and of this last, and greatest of them all, to my poor weeping girl.

"What says the Lord Melantius?" asked be aloud; "I did not bear him; or at least I did not bear aright." "I said," replied Melantius, in the same calm tone, after glancing around to see that they were alone,—" I said that I must kill the King; and that I cannot do it safely, unless my friend Calianax will give me up the keys of this Citadel: which he will do, I know, if it be only for the love he bears to me and mine!"

Calianax was no less perplexed by these extraordinary words, (which seemed to him simple madness,) than by the calm and perfectly unembarrassed tone and manner in which they were uttered; and he saw no way of replying to them, but by silently passing on towards the outer gate of the Fort; which he was preparing to do, when Melantius stepped before him, and said, in a totally altered manner, but still with the same firmness and self-possession,—

"Nay, Calianax, do not think to leave me thus. I must and will have what I seek of you; by fair means, if it may be so; if not——"

"Why this is madness—or worse"—inter-

courage entirely forsook him, on perceiving that Melantion had at any rate some determined purpose in view; though of what nature he was still unable even to guess. And as he well knew that the purposes of Melantius, whatever they were, seldom went unperformed, all he now desired was, to escape from him for the moment, that he might take immediate advantage, with the King, of the words which had been, as he thought, so madly or foolishly uttered. Accordingly, he addressed all his little cunning and dexterity to the sole end, of getting himself and his most unwelcome companion fairly out of the Port.

"Would Melantius make a traitor of me?" he continued.—"If he would, he must at least give me a little time to consider of it."

"I take you at your word," said Melantius, stopping him short; "an hour hence I'll seek you in the hall of the palace, and I look to find you friendly to my purpose. Farewell."

And he instantly left Calianax, utterly bewildered by the unaccountable words he had heard, but even more pleased than bewildered, at having so unexpectedly got rid of the utterer of them, and at the certainty which they seemed to promise him, of a speedy requital of the fancied injuries he had suffered.

"This fighting fool," said he to himself, "dares talk even more than he dares act; which is what I did not look for from him. But if I do not make his words (jests though they were) as fatal to him as if he had put them into deeds, may the pale cheek of my poor patient girl never know red again!"

And he hastened on towards the palace, as fast as his old limbs would carry him.

As for Melantius, so sure was he of succeeding in that part of his enterprise which depended upon Calianax, that on leaving him he proceeded to arrange with two or three of his most trusty followers, as to the occupation of the fort on the following morning; and then he at once

addressed himself to the more important and difficult task, of preparing Evadue for the part which he intended for to act, in his proposed Tragedy.

CHAPTER VII.

THERE was to be a second great banquet at the palace that night, in honour of the late marriage; and there it was that Melantius proposed to put in practice the stratagem that was to gain him possession of the Fort,—and the first step of which stratagem consisted in the seemingly mad avowal which he had just made to Calianax.

The halls of the palace were splendidly adorned and lighted; the tables were set out with all dainty fare; the ordinary guests were arrived; and nothing was wanting to complete the gorgeous scene, but the presence of the King himself, and those nobles of the land who formed his immediate train.

The course of our Tale finishs us to consum currelves much with this gay multipole; but it does not permit us to pass it by without relating, that Aspatia was there,—her pale face and boostiful form moving muchly among the glittering throng, garlanded funtuatically, as if with merificial flowers,—like a spotless heifer pacing the floor of some gorgeous temple, surrounded by the proud priests and senseless votarists in whose sight, and for whose pleasure, it is presently to die.

The King at length arrived,—seemingly in earnest conversation with old Calianax, and preceding his train by a short space. Among the latter were Amintor, Evadne, and Melantius.

As the King entered the hall, those who looked at him with observant eyes might perceive a slight shade of trouble spread over his face, which the incredulous and half contemptuous smile that curled his lip as he spoke to Calianax, seemed to endeavour in vain to chase away.

: £ .

"Nay, nay," said the King in a low voice, as they passed up the hall, amid the crash of music, to the platform on which the royal table was elevated—"it is your old enmity to him that conjures up this fancy in your brain: for I will not think that you could dare deceive me by inventing it."

"My liege, I pledge my life that it is true," said Calianax.

"What," continued the King—" that he plainly told you—told you, his ancient enemy—that he would kill me, and must have the Citadel to aid in his escape?"

"I will accuse him of it now, Sire, in the open hall, and before all this great assembly, if you so will it, and will protect me from his mad vengeance."

"No,"—said the King. Then, after considering a moment, he added—"I know not, Calianax, how to either believe or disbelieve you, in this matter. But we may find a way to reach the truth, if you dare stand the trial of it. He



guilt or innocence; but i your loyalty, Calianax, no years spent in my service, show anger at this jest, or whatever not give you to his venger fatal. This dream of your call it an invention of your buried in my breast. But your office—(nay, you shall—for who so fit, if honest, least to name a successor? court for ever. Do you so peril, in accusing Melantius or life?"

the end of this adventure,—which he had at first looked upon as so secure a means of vengeance upon his old enemy, and at the same time so just a one: for there was something in the manner of Melantius when they last met, which fully persuaded him that his views really were such as he had avowed them.

By this time the King was seated; and the banquet commenced. After a while, as Melantius and Calianax were both standing near him, the King called for a cup of wine; and when he had received it, he paused for a moment, looking thoughtfully as he lifted it to his lips; and then, without tasting it, he turned to Melantius, and casting a penetrating look at his countenance, said,—

- "I am thinking, Melantius, how easy it were for any one we trust, to take our life—in such a cup of wine as this, for instance."
- "It were not difficult, Sire," said Melantius,
 —"at least for a traitor at once bold and cunning."

"Such as you are," thought Calianax; and he almost said it.

"We who sit on thrones," continued the King, still keeping his eye fixed on Melantius, "had need have honest men about us—such as you all are here."

And he took his eyes from Melantius, and bowing around, drank the cup of wine that he held in his hand.

During the few moments which this action occupied, Melantius stepped close to Calianax, and whispered in his ear,—

"Well—have you thought of what we talked of? My purpose still holds; and as you did not keep your appointment with me, you may tell me your determination here."

Then, without waiting for a word of reply, he resumed his place beside the King,—leaving Calianax in greater astonishment and perplexity than ever, at his seemingly insane boldness.

Meanwhile the King, after exchanging a few

indifferent words with others who were about him, again addressed himself pointedly to Melantius, and again kept his eyes fixed on him while he spoke.

- "And yet it would show a strange and insane desperation, to attempt such an act here. He that did it must at least have sold his life beforehand. He could not escape."
- "Not if he were known," said Melantius, without seeming to perceive anything extraordinary in the words or manner of the King.
- "He would be known, Melantius," said the King, still more pointedly than before.
- "And if he were," said Melantius, "and should still escape, it must be by bearing away all our lives upon his sword. There is no other means."
- "Yes," said the King, "one way there is, and one person, even here, who might do it—and safely too. Old Calianax there—the governor of the Citadel. Nay, Calianax," continued the King, "do not think I doubt your love and

loyalty—they have been tried too long. But you might do it, having the means of safety and escape in your own hands. He who holds the Citadel, holds the King's life at his will—does he not, Melantius?"

Then, without seeming to wait for a reply, he called Calianax close up to him, and said in a whisper,—" Well, what say you now? Do you still persist! Sure you have dreamt this foolish story. I have uttered words that must have fetched the blood into his face, and shook his limbs with fear, had he a thought of guilt within him. And yet you see he flinches not. Nay,—look at him now. How could he bear, think you, these whisperings and these looks—pointed upon him as they are,—if thoughts of treasonous murder were at work within him? Go, Calianax—let me hear no more of this doting folly.—for such it is, or worse."

And he seemed at once to cast all doubts and suspicions from him, and turned to converse with some of the other courtiers who now came round him. The King had scarcely done this, before Melantius was once more at the side of Calianax, whispering in his ear the same apparently insane proposition, which now struck upon his senses like the muttering of some strange spell, and seemed to drive him to distraction; and he immediately exclaimed aloud, without directly addressing the King, and so that the whole assembly might hear him,—

"There! there! he says it again! he urges me again!" Then turning to the King, he added,—"My liege, even now, this instant, he bad me give him up the Fort. You might have heard him."

"This is madness," said the King;—" let him be looked to." Then, turning to Melantius, he added,—" Melantius, what has befallen anew betwixt you and Calianax, that the mere sight of you seems to move him thus?"

Melantius replied calmly, that Calianax had become much changed of late, and particularly since the marriage of Amintor with Evadne had killed his daughter's hopes; and that these strange moods of seeming madness were common with him. Then, the moment the King's attention was directed elsewhere, he turned to Calianax again, who was standing alone, utterly confounded by all that he saw and heard, and said to him, in the same fearful whisper, which seemed to pierce into his heart like a flame of fire,—

"How long must I treat you thus, Calianax, before you give me up the Fort? Come—say it is mine at once. It must be, and shall be. To-morrow it will be taken from you, whether you will or no. And it will be strange if my services cannot then command so poor a reward as the procuring it for whom I please. Besides—give it me willingly, and it shall cure our feud, and shall be yours again when I have killed the King, and made my terms of safety. What say you? Shall I have it?"

Calianax could bear no more, but burst out into a weak fury of passionate exclamation,

which the King put an end to at once, by saying,—

"Calianax, be silent, and leave the court; and remember that though I see and pity the cause of this strange folly, the price of it must be paid. All the court has heard your mad accusal of my most valued servant and friend; and they must know, from your example, that such words, wild and empty though they be, may not be uttered lightly."

Calianax was about to say something, with a beseeching gesture, and between rage and weeping; but the King added, with an air of dignified severity,—

"No more!—Leave us!"

And he retired to a distant part of the hall, and was followed by the whole assembly; leaving Melantius and Calianax alone together.

"And am I mad?" said Calianax aloud, and not observing Melantius—"And is this folly that I have uttered? Did I not hear him speak those

words? Do they not even now ring in my ears like sounds from hell?"

At this moment Melantius said, once more—
"Well Calianax, am I to have it yet—this foolish Citadel? Or must I wait till to-morrow for it?—You see it must be mine."

Calianax was again confounded into utter silence; while Melantius continued, in an altered tone, as if moved by his grievous perplexity,—

"Come, old man—I pity your great sorrows, and your daughter's, and am grieved that I must do that which adds to them. But it is my own (which are still greater) that make me do it. I'must have the Citadel. Give it up to me, and I will avenge your wrongs with my own. It is not our old feud which makes me treat you thus: that is forgotten in greater things. The King has wronged me, and I must kill him."

"Again?" exclaimed Calianax. "And if the King were here, would you again deny those words, before my face?" "Try me. Go to him now, and I will follow you, and—"

"You shall have the Citadel," said the poor perplexed old man, as he seemed to sink into a sort of despairing imbecility.—"The King believes me mad—perhaps I am so. My honours are taken from me; my services despised; my poor girl dying; and my boy—he is too young to revenge our wrongs, and is not here to hear them. To-morrow he will be home—but to-morrow will be too late—"

Just at this moment, Diphilus, the brother of Melantius, came to them, with a look of eager haste upon his face, and said,—

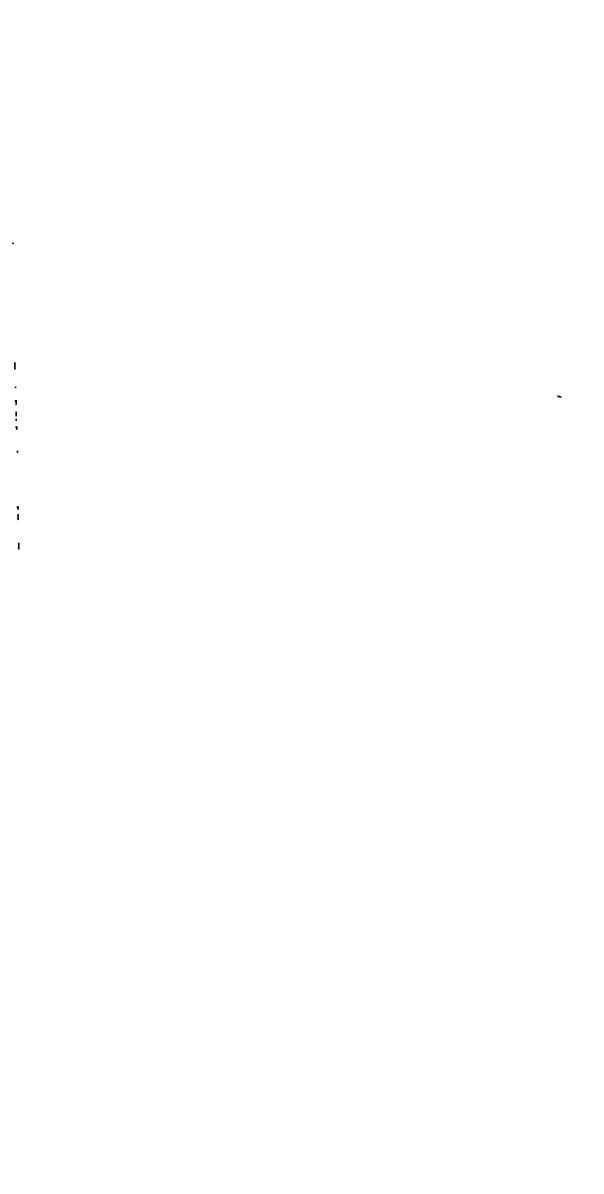
"It must be done to-night, Melantius. I heard him, but now, bid our sister come to him after the banquet. Have you schooled her in her task? And will she do it?"

"She will"—said Melantius. "Never was a repentance more absolute than that which now possesses her. She seemed to glory in her shame only while it was not shame, but guilt

-only while she thought no eye could see it. But now that she believes all eyes are ready to turn on her in scorn, her own have lost the film that lust (not love) had drawn over them; and she sees and loathes the plague-spots that are on her, and that spread from her to us-reaching the remotest memory of our house. I think that she will do it—and bravely too—for she sees that so only can our honour be appeased, and hers avenged. That she wants the courage for this deed, I fear not-for that which calls for it was bolder still, in Dion's daughter, and Melantius' sister." After a short pause he added,-" I'll see her again. It must be done tonight, whether she do it or not. Meantime our friend here, old Calianax, will give you up the Citadel. Go with him, Calianax, and fear nothing. We'll see you safely through the dangers that are abroad, and that, but for this wise compliance with our wishes, must have crushed you.-Go."

And the poor old man went as he was bid,

without another word; as if he felt himself utterly helpless, like a child before its task-master, and compelled to yield, body and soul, to the will of his persecutor.



CHAPTER VIII.

Pass we now to the conclusion of the banquet, when every guest and attendant had left the open apartments of the palace, and all was hushed in the stillness of seeming slumber. But of those with whom our Tale has concerned itself, not one had sought the couch of rest, or felt as if he should ever need to press it again. The King had retired to his private apartments, his soul exulting in its sense of power and pride of place, and his countenance lighted up with an impetuous joy, at the mere anticipation of the pleasures that presently awaited him, in the arms of his guilty paramour; and he no more thought of sleep, than the

hungry tiger does when his prey is approaching, and in sight.

Of the rest, Amintor, on retiring from the hall of banquet, had sought refuge from the herce troubles that tormented him, in the soothing stillness of one of the outer courts of the palace—which occupied a sort of terrace, looking upon the sea-shore. There he paced backwards and forwards listlessly, beneath the cool moonlight; the soft air, rich even to heaviness with the breath of many flowers, bathing his brow, and steeping his senses in that dim forgetfulness of all but the present moment, which even the most wretched can sometimes find, when they least look for it. He had come there to commune with his accumulated sorrows, and as it were to project them over all the future,-by meditating on the means he should take, of either bearing them or casting them off. But the soft wind as it blew upon him, and the sweet incense that the flowers sent forth, and the still beauty of the scene that spread itself out interminably before his eyes, sleeping in the moonlight,—all these worked together to do the gentle will of nature upon him, and lap his wearied spirit in that oblivion of the past, without which the present had been as nothing to him, and the future filled with desolation.

There let us leave the poor sufferer for a while, to taste that brief rest which sleep would not have brought to him. He has need of something to strengthen his heart for the griefs that await it.

As for Melantius and Evadne, the former took care that they should meet together as they quitted the hall; and he led her to a private apartment, and soon found that she was as bold in the new course of honour which he had taught her, as she had been in her late one, of shame and guilt. We must leave them together, and learn the nature of their conference from its results.

. Calianax and Diphilus we left proceeding,

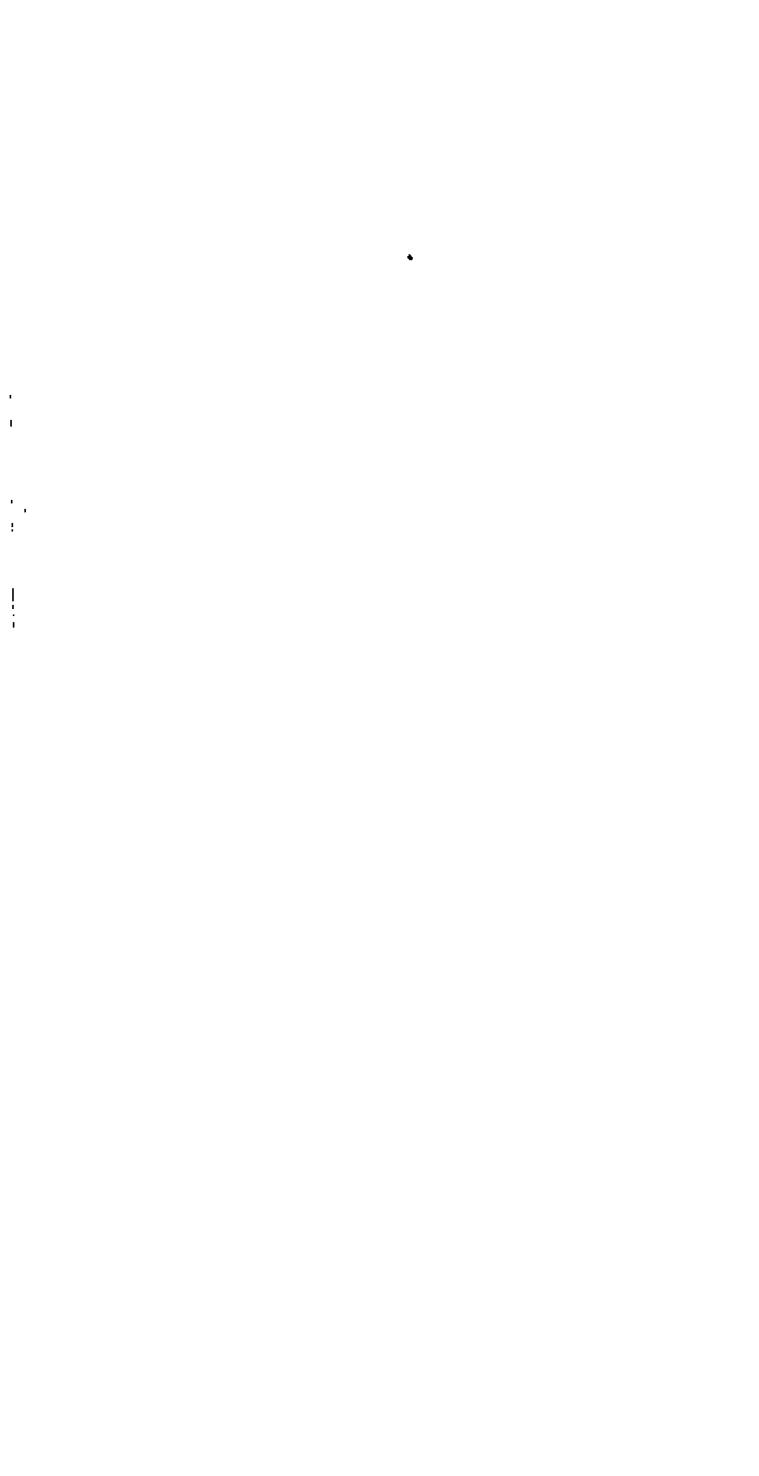
the one to give, the other to take, pomention of the Citadel.

Let us turn to the sad Aspetia. She had commanded her maidens not to attend her in her apartments that night; and she retired thither from the banquet, in a spirit nearer to a happy one than she had thought that she should ever again be mistress of: for nothing so surely brings to us that perfect tranquillity of heart in which the state we call happiness chiefly consists, as the certainty that the one purpose of our souls is at its point of accomplishment. And thus it was with this gentle victim of a broken vow. She stood upon the vantageground of her own resolute will, and saw from it the to-morrow that was to end all her griefs; and she leaned and yearned towards it, as the weary pilgrim yearns towards the shrine that he sees before him, at which he is to lay down the burthen of his sins, and once more be free from their deadly weight.

How the two hours of darkness following

CHATSWORTH.

the close of the banquet were passed by the several persons towards whom we have just cast a momentary glance, must be gathered from the events which ushered in the morning.



CHAPTER IX.

THE dawning day found Amintor gazing upon it, at first tenderly, as its tender streaks of grey light seemed to steal upon the skirts of the departing darkness; then, with feelings almost amounting to a momentary sense of triumphant joy, as the east opened before him, like the portals of some great temple, and shot forth its rich splendours, showering them upward over the whole overhanging firmament, and changing it all into one scene of gorgeous beauty, the tints and traces of which varied every moment, as they seemed at once to blend and vie with each other in bright intensity.

He was thus gazing, in momentary forget-vol. 11.

fulness of all but what he saw before him, when he heard himself addressed by a voice close at hand, in the words, "My Lord Amintor!"

Alas! if a vision of beauty can blind our eyes for a while to all but its own loveliness, a single sound can fetch our wandering senses home again in an instant, and fix them, like chained galley-slaves, to the theme that is their hane.

The moment Amintor heard his own name pronounced, the bright pageant on which he was gazing passed away from his senses, as if it had been dispersed by a thunder-clap, and he at once became, what he had been on leaving the banquet-room on the preceding night—a hopeless sufferer, dead to all things but the sense of his own utter wretchedness—so dead as not even to see before him that actual death which was his only refuge.

At the sound of the above words, he at first did but start, and close his eyes. He then opened them, and looked upon the ground for a moment, and then closed them again firmly, and stood with his arms depending by his side, and his head bent in silence, as if he could thus shut out that which he too surely knew was not without him, but a part of himself.

The person addressing him, on perceiving that he did not notice his words, though he had evidently heard them, waited for a few moments, and then addressed him again:

"My Lord Amintor."

Amintor now turned, and found that it was one of his own servants, who explained that he had been seeking him, and that a youth, who had lately arrived from the army, was without, and earnest in his desire to see him; and before Amintor could either deny or assent to a conference with one he knew not, the youth appeared on the terrace, and approached him.

He was dressed in military attire, and of extreme beauty; but so pale as to impair the effect which his appearance might otherwise have produced. His extreme paleness, how-

ever, seemed to be in some degree accounted for, by certain marks upon his face, as if to cover wounds received at no distant period.

At sight of the youth, there came upon Amintor's heart a pang, which he could not immediately account for; and he was beginning to lose himself again in his sorrows, when the youth announced himself as the brother of Aspatia.

This seemed at once to recall Amintor to himself; and he looked at the youth earnestly, but silently, for a few moments, and then took his unresisting hand, and pressed it,—and his heart trembled within him, and his eyes filled with tears, which he did not turn away to hide.

Having requested him to dismiss his attendant, the youth continued, in a voice that shook Amintor even more than the words it uttered,—

"Perhaps it scarcely needed, Sir, to tell you who I am; for before these blemishes were on my face (got there in the late wars), people would say it was the picture of my sister's. And, knowing me, I scarce need tell my business with you. At least I have no skill to tell it in many words. Briefly, you have wronged my sister, Sir,—and are of too proud a race either to deny those wrongs, or the justice that I am come to claim for them."

"Deny her wrongs!" said Amintor—moved to a pitch of almost child-like grief, at every word which came from the youth's lips—"Deny them! Oh, gentle youth—would it were but as easy to repair, as to confess and repent them!—Pray leave me. I know not what you would have; but I cannot bear to look upon you; and to hear you speak, seems almost to dry up the little life that is left within me. Would it could! Pray leave me. I'll speak with you hereafter."

"I do not come to talk with you, Sir," said the youth,—"and if I did, there is no time for that. Besides," continued he, with a slight falter in his voice,—"my sister, who sent me hither, bad me not listen to your words. Come, Sir—the laws, you know, are strict against single combats; and we had best decide our difference here, and at once. We may be stayed, else. Come, Sir—draw, and defend yourself."

"Fight with you?" exclaimed Amintor.

"Seek to justify the wrong that I have done your sister? Good youth, you cannot think the thing I would not do, to requite her gentle sorrows—anything but look upon her: for the sight even of you shoots pangs into me, that—

Pray, leave me," he continued, after a pause, during which his heart seemed trembling on his lips—"another time I would fain see and know you—but leave me now—I cannot bear to look upon you."

"Ah!" said the youth, mournfully,—and with a tearful tremble in his sad, gentle voice,—"Ah!—it is as she said. She told me that if I dared to listen to you, you would speak words that would fetch the tears into my eyes. And so

indeed they do.—But yet," continued he, after a suppressed effort to rally his thoughts—"But yet she bad me not leave you, till I had righted her great injuries—and I will not. Come, Sir, no more words—but draw!"

"Not upon you," said Amintor, in the same sad prostration of spirit which had come upon him from the first moment he beheld this youth—"Not on Aspatia's brother—not though I were shamed and shunned throughout the land for it. Once more leave me. I will not fight with you."

"Nay, then," exclaimed the youth, while a strange calm seemed to keep possession of him as he spake,—"Nay, then, I must find a way to make you—for fight we must, and one of us must die!"

And he stepped up to Amintor, and struck him on the breast with his glove.

"There!" said he; and as Amintor started back from his touch, and stood writhing under the insult, the youth added, in a calm though trembling voice,—

one way to avenge my sister's wrongs—and I must take it. In her loss, and in the fatal grief that it has fixed upon her, (I may say so—for she does not seek to hide it, even from you,) we have lost all but our honour—and that must not go too."

By the time he ceased speaking, Amintor had somewhat collected his scattered thoughts; and he now said slowly, and in a solemn tone,—

"Thy sister, youth, is a thing so much above my honour—she is so sainted in my sight by her deep wrongs—that I can endure even this for her—even a blow. Now be satisfied, and leave me."

And he turned away slowly, with an air of utter dejection, and was about to depart;—but the youth again stepped up to him, saying,—

"I see then that my sister has been wronged even worse than I had thought. She has been fooled by some faint-hearted slave, who dares not fight. At least he may be beaten, then."

And he followed Amintor, and struck him across the face with his sword. Then, seeming to sink within himself at the effort, as Amintor turned fiercely upon him, and drew his weapon, he added, in a hollow, murmuring voice, to himself,—

- "Will he never give me my death?"
- "Foolish boy!" exclaimed Amintor, as he pointed his sword, and waited a moment for the youth to prepare himself—"the gods forgive me if I kill thee—but flesh and blood cannot bear this."

The instant that the youth saw Amintor's sword fairly pointed at him, he rushed forward, with his own sword uplifted, and in what, at first, seemed to Amintor a desperate effort to beat down his weapon and disarm him. But he stood firm—and the youth suddenly retreated a pace or two, after having come in contact with his weapon,—though with what

effect Amintor could not perceive; for the youth again rushed towards him, with his arms all abroad, and again met the point of his sword with his breast, as before. Upon this, Amintor dropped his hand, and exclaimed, as the youth stood bending before him, and pressing his hand to his breast, as if wounded,—

"Why, what is this?—you do not fight, but rush upon my sword as if you sought your own death, not mine."

At this instant, the scene before Amintor, sad as it was, underwent a fearful change. He heard the sound of near footsteps approaching, and turning, he beheld Evadne, rushing towards him, her hands and garments steeped in blood, and holding a bloody dagger !

"Greet me, Amintor," exclaimed she, with an air of wild triumph, and spreading her blood-stained hands and arms abroad;—"Greet me; and in that greeting, pardon, and receive me! I have done a deed that cleanses both our honours. Nay, gaze not on me so,—but speak!"

What tools and puppets are we to the bodily senses! The mere sight of Evadne drove, in an instant, from the thoughts of Amintor, all that had so fearfully filled them during the last half-hour; and he saw nothing before him but her form, and the fatal signs which accompanied it. As for her words, he heard them not; and when she ceased to speak, he still kept gazing on her silently, as if what he saw had changed him into stone.

"Noble Amintor," she continued, after a momentary pause,—"let loose your eyes, and speak to me! You thought Evadne lovely, and you loved her, even when you knew that she was leprous with pollution. Is she not lovelier now? Do not these bloody rites make her look still more beauteous?"

"What would you?" exclaimed Amintor at length. "What means this horrid sight? And why do you seek me?"

"I have killed the King" she exclaimed.

onto a lock of wilder exaltation than before.

"I had forgotten to——"

"Woman" exclaimed Aminton,—moved at once from the bull apathetic state into which the exhausting emotions of the last few minutes had thrown hom,—" you have not!—you dened not do it! Even I dared not—dared not to think of it—I, whom he has so deeply arouged.

But you!—why he loved you—trusted you—he laid his sleeping life within your arms!"

"I have slain him," exclaimed Evadne;—
"slain him in his bed—that very bed which
was the impious altar on which he sacrificed a
Virgin's honour—and in it the honour of a
house almost as high-born and as noble as
his own. Oh, Amintor!" she continued,—after
a pause, and in a less wild and exulting strain—
as if her over-wrought feelings were beginning to
regain their wonted course;—"my noble brother
Melantius—Oh! how I thank you for telling
him of my foul guiltiness!—he came to me,

and turned my eyes within, and showed me such a sight, that——"

"Evadne," exclaimed Amintor,—scarcely hearing what she said, or heeding what she was about to say;—"have you indeed committed this dread act? If you have, leave me at once. The very fear of it makes me loathe to look upon you. Leave me? If you stay, I know not what my hand may do—made desperate by my sorrows and my wrongs."

"It was for you I did it," exclaimed Evadne, franticly.—" And do you now loathe me for it? Had he not shamed us past all thought?"

"Was he not our King?" exclaimed Amintor.

During the whole of what has been described since the entrance of Evadne, the youth had been standing silently on the spot where Amintor left him, when he turned away, with his hand pressed upon his bosom, his slight form bending as if it would every moment fall, and his head leaning upon his

breast like a broken flower, and waxing more deadly pale every moment that he stood: when, just as Amintor spake the above words, the youth uttered a stifled groan, his limbs gave way under him, and he fell to the ground.

"Look there!" exclaimed Amintor, in a voice in which pity and anger seemed struggling with each other—"Look at that poor youth—Aspatia's brother—dead!—dead by my hand!—and for you, whose hands are red with a King's blood! Away, foul woman! Leave me! I 'loathe you now, almost as much as once I loved you. Leave me, or—"

"Amintor," cried she, in a tone of wild grief, as his words seemed to pierce her like daggers,
—"Amintor, do not cast me off! Beware! I am desperate."

Then, after a pause, she sank at his feet and clasped his knees, and seemed to melt away into a momentary passion of mingled tenderness and remorse, and was about to speak, when he withdrew himself from her grasp, and she fell to the ground,—while he once more bade her leave him, and was turning to quit the place. But she suddenly started to her feet, and cried,—

"Stay!" in a voice and with an air that seemed to resume something of their old expression of pride and command.

"Stay!" she said. "At least receive me dead!"

And she instantly plunged into her breast the dagger that she had never relinquished from her grasp,—and fell dead at his feet.

Again Amintor stood transfixed, and gazed (almost unconsciously for the first few moments) on the fearful scene that was before him. At length he recovered sufficient possession of himself to feel that there was but one course left for him, and that the end of all was at hand. He summoned his heart to strengthen itself for the act that he seemed called upon to do; and then, after a calm pause of a few moments, communed with himself aloud,—

"This earth of mine doth tremble, and I feel A stark, affrighted motion in my blood: My soul grows weary of her house, and I All over am a trouble to myself. There is some hidden power in these dead things, That calls my flesh unto them. I am cold. Be resolute, and bear them company !-There's something yet which I am loath to leave. There's man enough in me to meet the fears That death can bring: and yet, would it were done ! -Yet still, betwixt this reason and the act, The wrong I to Aspatia did stands up : I have not such another fault to answer. Though she may justly arm herself with scorn And hate of me, my soul will part less troubled, When I have paid to her in tears my sorrow. I will not leave this act unsatisfied, If all that's left in me can answer it."

Saying this, he was about to depart. But his cup of misery was not yet full. He had scarcely uttered the last words, when the youth who lay at his feet gave a faint inward murmur, as if awaking from a troubled sleep; and then, as Amintor in an instant knelt over him, and lifted his heavy head from the earth, he opened his dim eyes, and breathed forth:—

"Amintor! Was it a dream? Ah!—no—he is here still. Amintor!——"

This sudden and unexpected change dispersed from Amintor's mind, for the moment, all but thoughts of how he might help and save the poor sufferer who rested heavily in his arms; and who now, as he was about to speak, murmured forth, in a voice that seemed to assume a still more touching softness than it had hitherto possessed, and the sound of which once more penetrated his heart, and shook it with a strange and new fear,—

- "Did you not name Aspatia."
- "Aye," said he.
- "And talk of giving tears and sorrow to her?"
- "Yes," he replied; "and but for this new joy that springs within me at the sight of your recovery, I was about to seek her, and vol. 11.

lay my penitent heart beneath her feet, and then, asking her sweet forgiveness, die before her."

"Ah! she is here!" exclaimed the seeming youth, while a faint flush came to her cheeks and lips, and an almost superhuman beauty passed suddenly into her face, and seemed to fix and settle there—"here in thine arms Amintor—she feels them clasped about her—Ah! do not loose them!" she cried—for her first words had struck to Amintor's heart like an ice-bolt, and stopped his blood, and paralyzed all his frame—so that her form was dropping from his hold, as if he had been suddenly stricken with death.

At her last words he seemed insensibly to close his arms about her again, so as to keep her from falling to the earth; but he still remained motionless and silent: while Aspatia, when she felt his arms pressed about her again, went on:—

[&]quot;Amintor-I have your pardon now to seek.

Forgive this trick that I have put upon you but I could not die anywhere but here—and by your hand."

His frame shook against hers as she spoke, as if with palsy—and she continued,—

"Nay—think not of it—it is nothing—it is but my poor body—my heart died long ago, when yours forsook it—though this kindness seems almost to make it live again. It does live! I feel it beat and leap against my side—the side that touches yours!—No!" said she faintly, and as if exhausted by the inward exertion she had long been making—"No! it is dead and cold—cold—I am cold all over—"

A shuddering thrill ran throughout her—and her eyes grew dim—and she spread her arms upon the air, as if feeling for something that had gone from her—and then she murmured forth, "Take me Amintor,—hold me,—there!—" And she dropped lifeless in his arms, which were still clasped unconsciously about her; and there he knelt over her motionless, in

the open sunshine, like a monument upon a grave.

As Amintor still knelt over Aspatia's body, pale and motionless as if entranced, a great shout was heard (not by him) from without the palace gates; and presently a tumultuous clamour seemed to fill the halls, and approach towards the terrace. But Amintor still knelt motionless over the body of Aspatia, as it hung within his clasped arms.

After a while the clamour was hushed, and Melantius appeared on the terrace. He had himself conducted Evadne to the door of the King's chamber—had waited and watched while she performed the dread deed of justice which he had put upon her, and had heard it performed—his eager ears drinking in, with a bitter joy, the last convulsive sounds of the King's dying voice. He then hurried instantly to the Fort, which was left in possession of his brother, Diphilus. There, from the walls, he summoned the King's brother, and the people

of the city; and he told them of the deadly injury that the late King had put upon him through his sister, and the just vengeance with which he had answered it,—declaring himself to have been the sole instigator, and virtually the inflictor, of that vengeance. He then tendered his allegiance to the lawful successor of the dead King, on condition of receiving, in the face of the assembled people, a full indemnity against the lawful consequences of his enforced act of justice, and free leave to either quit the kingdom at once, or stay in it, as he might thereafter see fit.

The dead King's brother and successor, being a just and honourable man, and moreover not forgetting the immediate power which Melantius held in his hands, and the still more resistless influence he was able to exercise over the whole army, which was devoted to him,—freely complied with these conditions. Melantius then ordered the gates of the Fort to be opened—yielded up the keys to old Calianax—

tendered his submission to the new King—and then instantly repaired to the Palace, in search of his unhappy sister. We have seen where and how he found her.

As for Amintor,-when he was awakened from his death-like trance by the voice and hand of his friend, and once more looked upon the scene around him, he felt that there was but one thing left for bim to do. But the very defect of character which had caused all the desolation that he saw about him, and felt within him, prevented him from embracing freely its only cure. He was not afraid to die; and he had no heart left within him, to make him wish to live. But he had not enough strength of will to cast off his burthen at once; and having borne it for an hour, he might bear it for a day -and if for a day, for a year; -and so on for a life. And so he did bear it, till it grew to be a part of himself: and though it soon bent him towards the earth with its weight, and pressed wrinkles into his smooth cheeks, and dimmed his eyes of youth, and whitened his rich hair, and made him an aged man, in all things but that patient wisdom and perfect knowledge which make age tolerable,—yet he bore it still, and would have borne it on for ever, had not Death been kinder to him than he could be to himself, and called him early to the peace of the grave.



The tale which occupied the Fourth of the Evenings at Chatsworth, was not preceded by any explanatory remarks on the part of its contributor, beyond a notification, that its sole claims on the favour of the company must depend on the successful development of its extremely complex and intricate plot; which development must itself necessarily depend, in a very great degree, on the attention the hearer or reader of it may be induced to bestow on the early scenes, where the different clues to the subsequent involvements and extrications are laid down, and the loss of any one of which will throw the whole narrative into confusion.

"For the plot itself," added the writer, "as the merit of its construction belongs exclusively to the old Spanish play-writer from whom I have borrowed it, I may be allowed to say, that it is perhaps the most ingeniously

intricate, yet the most perfectly complete and effective in its results, of anything of the kind that is to be met with, even in that store-house of such elaborate ingenuities, the old Spanish dramatists."

The narrative dates during the wars between Spain and the Low Countries—about 1572.



THE ROMANCE OF AN EVENING.

CHAPTER I.

"AH!" sighed forth the young and beautiful Donna Portia de Ronda, to her no less lovely friend and kinswoman, Donna Camilla de Peñas, as they sat together at the residence of the former at Seville, towards the fall of a rich autumn evening, each nourishing in her bosom, under pretence of endeavouring to dissipate, the sweet griefs on which each unconsciously loved to dwell, and which they cherished with a fondness scarcely less fervent than the passion from which those griefs sprang—"Ah! my dear cousin, you are as yet acquainted with but half the miseries that

attend my ill-fated love for the noble Octavio. You know with what a tried faith—with what an unmatched generosity-with what a wise discreetness—he has long served me; for (thanks to your kind friendship!) that service has been chiefly paid to me under the cloak of a feigned passion for you: else had the violent and jealous nature of my brother Henriques long since placed me beyond the reach of all communication with Octavio. You know, too, the events of that fatal evening, when the impetuous Henriquez, driven almost to madness by your firm rejection of his suit, was passing by your balcony, and believed that he saw Octavio addressing you, (for he supposed me to be at home,) and with an air and manner that plainly told it was a mistress he was pleading to. You know the desperate revenge my brother attempted that same evening, against the life of his supposed rival, by waylaying him as he returned home; and the escape of Octavio,

after having been forced, in his own defence, to kill Don Gaspar, my brother's sworn friend, and the abettor of his murderous design."

"And yet," continued Portia, after a momentary pause, and partly addressing Camilla, partly musing to herself,—"so unhappy has every event growing out of our passion hitherto proved, that the failure of my brother's base and cruel design against Octavio has scarcely been less fatal to our hopes than if its success had been complete; since the noble Octavio is forced to hide himself like a common felon, from the vengeance that my brother still unceasingly meditates, and that the law now offers to him safely, as the penalty of Don Gaspar's death. Unhappy that I am! What are your griefs to mine, Camilla?"

"And is this, then, the sum of them, my dear Portia?" said her friend.

"Alas! no"—exclaimed Portia, with a passionate accession of sorrow; "in dwelling on my past and present sufferings, I am forgetting

the worse sorrows that await me. What I am now to tell you is a new misery, that I had never even dreamt of. Left by my dead parents at the disposal of my brother's sole and absolute will, the law, you know, takes from me all power of disputing that will, even in the case of marriage itself. You have often seen how his violent and suspicious temper has treated me; more like a slave or servant than a sister. And now, to crown his cruelties and my miseries at once, it was only a few days ago that he compelled me to sign a contract, which binds me to wed a husband I have never seen, whom he has chosen for me. and who is this very night expected to arrive in Seville, and claim my hand."

"This is, indeed, unhappy news, my sweet cousin," said Camilla, "and calls for speedy means to meet it. But that you may not think your own griefs greater by comparison than they are, I will now tell you mine, which I have hitherto concealed, even from you: for

knowing their hopeless, helpless nature, I was fain to suffer beneath them in silence, rather than add a weight to yours, which would not have lightened my own. And if I tell them to you now, it is that you may draw some comfort from the knowledge, that a resolute patience has enabled as weak a woman as yourself to bear without repining greater griefs than yours: for greater I must call them; since you at least rejoice in the possession of his love who has yours; while I——but you shall hear.

"You know it is but lately that I visited the court of the Emperor, whither I accompanied my dear brother, Carlos. (In this, I confess, happier than yourself, Portia, for he has ever been as kind and gentle with me as yours is rough and tyrannous.) We had been absent but a short time, when urgent business called my brother back to Seville; and on our return, passing, in our haste, too near a garrison of the enemy, (but this you already know,) our VOL. II.

energy was surprised by a purty of house, and we were all made prisoners.

"I was separated from my brother at the first onset; and being carried into the garrison, and seen by the governor, he the next day sent for me, to his private parilion, and after inquiring my mane and family, made me proffers of his love. At first he addressed see as a lover merely; but being stong by my resolute and indignant refusal of his odious passion, he presently changed his tone, and approached me as a master, who had acquired the rights of conquest over his prisoner.

"Think of my condition, Portia—alone, and in the absolute power of a man whose very looks, to say nothing of his threats, and the relation in which I stood to him as a prisoner, bespoke him capable of using any means to gain his desperate ends!

"For some time I spurned his hated addresses, in terms which seemed to awe him into something like a fear of using the violence towards me which he still threatened. But at last, after gazing on me in an agitated manner for a few moments, a feeling of desperate triumph seemed to lighten up his dark eyes, and he suddenly rushed upon me, and clasping his powerful arms around me, was dragging me towards the door of an inner apartment, when I perceived the hilt of a dagger projecting from a part of his dress. I instantly seized it, and contriving, by a sudden and desperate effort, to disengage my right arm from his grasp, I raised it in the air, and should the next moment have plunged it into his breast, if he had not released his hold of me, and stepped back a few paces. He no sooner did so, and I felt myself free from his touch, than I turned the direction of the dagger, and pointing it to my own bosom, vowed solemnly that if he advanced another step towards me, I would lay myself dead at his feet.

"His looks seemed to indicate that he regarded this as an empty threat, which I

should not dare to perform; and as I held the uplifted dagger in my outstretched hand, ready to execute my purpose if he again approached me, he seemed meditating for a moment how he should frustrate my purpose without danger to himself, when suddenly a great shout was heard without, and a confused din of warlike sounds, at which my persecutor at first started wildly, then listened for a moment with eager and anxious looks, and then rushed away, leaving me alone in the apartment.

"The wild joy that seized on me at his disappearance was too sudden and overpowering to be endured; and I almost instantly swooned. What took place during the interval of my insensibility, I know not; but on recovering my senses, I found myself lying on a couch, beside which was kneeling a stranger, of a noble mien and person, and in military attire, who, on his addressing me, I found to be a fellow-countrymen and a soldier.

"In reply to my inquiries, the stranger

I had lately been a prisoner had been surprised by a troop under his orders, and that he was now ready to obey any commands that I might be pleased to lay upon him, as to my safe conveyance from the fortress, as soon as the condition of health in which he had found me would permit my removal. But as he said this, and still kept kneeling by my side, and gazing in my face, there was a look of deep and intense interest in my fate, seeming to arise out of the circumstances under which he had found me in the apartments of the governor, that at once pierced to my inmost heart, and lighted up feelings there—"

Here Camilla interrupted herself abruptly, and after a moment's pause, resumed.

"Do not, my dearest Portia, permit your feminine delicacy to upbraid the sudden birth of those feelings; but remember the peril (a thousand times worse than death) from which it was evident he had rescued me; the dangers that still seemed to surround me in the absence of my dear brother; the ardent, yet tender respectfulness of his manner towards me; his noble person; his gallant bearing:—in short, believe that a pure, deep, and inextinguishable love, may be born, and reach to its maturity, in a single instant.

my narrative. I have told you that this gallant soldier (still kneeling beside the couch on which I lay) tendered me, in the most respectful terms, his protection in the perils that environed me. I had scarcely time to accept (which I did with the frankness that became my situation) his offered services, and to observe the eager joy which rushed into his deep eyes and flushed his beautiful countenance as I yielded myself to his sole care and direction,—when suddenly, new alarms arose in the garrison; shouts and war-cries

were again heard; and the name of 'Antonio' was loudly and eagerly repeated, by numerous voices that seemed moving in all directions.

"My new protector started to his feet at these sounds, and with an air and mien that I could almost have fancied to bespeak a desperate conflict between love and honour, he exclaimed—

"Pardon, lady, that I am compelled for a moment to abandon the dear charge you have been pleased to place in my hands. I know not what these new alarms portend; but I am leader here, and will not affront the noble nature that looks out from that face, by supposing you would think me worthy of the high task of protecting your honour, if I could forget my own. Those cries are from my troops, who seek their leader in some present peril; and I must fly to them. The danger, whatever it may be, cannot be great or lasting. When it is over I will instantly return to you. In the mean time, feel yourself safe here; for

I will place such guards about your chamber as shall defy all present peril. In truth, lady, if I were not sure of this,' said he, on perceiving that my fears were returning, 'I doubt if Antonio de Mendosa would not abendose even his honour itself, rather than for a moment endanger that matchless beauty and virtue (so he said) which has placed itself under his care.'

"At this moment, the shouts of the soldiery were redoubled; my gallant protector rushed from the chamber; and I have never beheld him since!

"How my dear brother was enabled to extricate me from my desolate situation, you already know."

"But what," exclaimed Portia eagerly, "what did you say was the name of your protector?"

"Antonio de Mendoza," replied Camilla.

"Antonio de Mendoza?" reiterated Portia, with increased marks of surprise.

At this point of the conference between our

heroines, the haughty, jealous, and vindictive Henriquez, brother to Portia, entered the apartment.

"I am glad to find," said he, "that though you do not entertain his suit as I could wish, you can at least think and speak of your affianced husband in his absence."

"Her husband!" exclaimed Camilla, in a quick whisper to herself, which almost reached the jealous ears of Henriquez.

"Have you," continued he, "prepared the letter I ordered you to write to him? Go, fetch it; I would send a servant with it, to meet him on his way hither."

At this moment a servant entered, bringing letters which a special messenger from Don Antonio de Mendoza had just delivered to him, at the same time begging an interview with Don Henriquez.

After reading Don Antonio's letter, which seemed to leave it a matter of some doubt whether he should be able to reach Seville that

night, Henriques quitted the apartment, to speak with the newly-arrived messenger, and Portia and Camilla retired together to an adjoining chamber.

CHAPTER II.

The two friends no sooner found themselves alone, than they at once threw aside the useless sorrows that had lately oppressed them, and set their woman's wit to work, to meet the extraordinary emergency which now presented itself, in the fact of the affianced husband of Portia being the very man on whom Camilla had irrevocably fixed her affections. For though Portia had hitherto seen no course open to her but that of yielding to the tyrannous will of her brother Henriquez, the moment she found that, by so doing, she should for ever mar the hopes of her cousin Camilla, she instantly summoned back all her faltering resolutions (which

her sincere love for Octavio had never permitted entirely to abandon her), and determined to unite with Camilla in devising some means, however desperate, of meeting the difficulties in which they seemed to be so inextricably involved.

Their first thought was to summon their faithful confidant, Flora, the waiting-woman of Portia; and their next, that Portia should risk a secret interview with her lover Octavio, (who remained concealed at his own house close at hand,) and apprize him of the situation in which all parties were placed, and beg his counsel and assistance.

As Portia had understood that her brother Henriques intended writing to Don Antonio immediately, by the messenger who had just brought letters from him, she thought there could not be a better opportunity of putting this last resolution into practice: she, therefore, immediately borrowed Camilla's veil, and putting it on, was proceeding to seek Flora to attend her, when the latter entered the apart-

ment in great haste, and informed her lady that Don Henriquez was that moment passing through the corridor, towards that apartment, attended by the messenger who had just arrived from Don Antonio. They had scarcely time to quit the apartment for the private chamber of Portia, which adjoined to it, before Henriquez and Ernesto entered.

"Where is your mistress?" said Don Henriquez to Flora, who remained in the outer apartment. "Tell her that a confidential servant of Don Antonio's attends her here, to pay his duty to her as his future mistress, and to receive from her own hand her letter to his lord."

Then, turning to Ernesto as Flora quitted the apartment, he said—

"You'll find the lady Portia in her home dress and without her veil; but being privileged by the commands you bear, to see and greet the future bride of your lord Don Antonio, my sister will dispense with that state which

her birth and station had else required. When you have done your errand, attend me in my own apartment, and receive my letters to your lord."

Henriques then left Ernesto; and almost at the same moment Camilla and Portia entered, attended by Flora, Portia still wearing the veil which she had borrowed from Camilla.

Seeing Camilla without a veil, Ernesto instantly approached, and was about to address her, when Portia, observing the mistake, and the lucky account to which it might be turned, had just time to apprise Camilla, and urge her to encourage it. Accordingly, the latter received Ernesto's high-flown compliments with a dignified condescension; inquired after the health of his lord, and when his arrival might be expected; and finally, desired Flora (who held Portia's letter, written by the direction of Henriques) to hand it to Ernesto. She then dismissed Ernesto, who retired with vivid impressions of the grace, beauty, and condescen-

sion of his future mistress. Of the lineaments of Portia herself he had, of course, not seen a trace; as she did not remove the borrowed veil during the interview.

It was now to be considered whether Portia might venture to prosecute her intended interview with Octavio. But on inquiring the exact time of the evening, it was found to be near seven o'clock, and consequently too late for Portia to risk an absence from home; as her brother must by this time have nearly prepared his letter to Antonio, and would, therefore, be almost certain, in his jealous watchfulness, to inquire for and miss her. It was finally determined, therefore, that Flora should be the bearer of a message to Octavio, desiring him to repair, at a particular hour, to a door opening on the garden at the back of Don Henriquez' house, and to which there easy communication from Portia's private chamber, the balcony of which overlooked it; and to wait there till he should be admitted into the garden.

This message was written on a set of tablets by means of which the lovers were in the habit of communicating, and of which each bore a key; and Flora was instantly despatched with it.

It is now time that we turn to the two lovers whose fates are so inextricably bound up with those of the unhappy ladies to whom we have just introduced the reader. We should first mention, however, that immediately on the departure of Antonio's messenger, Don Henriquez took the opportunity of hurrying to the house of his friend the Corregidor, to invite him to attend the approaching marriage of Portia; and that, meeting his kinsman Don Carlos on the way (who was coming to attend his sister Camilla home) they went to the house of the Corregidor together.

The jealous watchfulness of Henriques over

his sister Portia had been so strict, since her forced signature of the contract to wed the unseen husband he had provided for her, that it was now many days since any communication had taken place between her and her lover.

It was now night-fall, when Octavio, who had condemned himself to a voluntary and secret imprisonment in his own house, rather than quit the neighbourhood of his mistress, ventured to issue from the half-opened door, and look forth from the portico, wrapped from head to foot in his cloak, which he held up so as almost to meet the large hat which was pressed down upon his brow.

Don Octavio was attended by his confidential valet, Diego; and they were conferring together, as to the probability of receiving any message or communication from the lady Portia, when they saw two persons approaching from the opposite end of the street, dressed in riding cloaks, and seemingly looking about

VOL. II.

them, as if they were not well acquainted with their way. As they came nearer, Octavio said to his companion,

"Why surely, Diego, that air and gait can belong to no one but my noble friend and fellow soldier, Don Antonio de Mendoza. Yet he should be in the Flanders' wars. Nay," continued he as the persons came nearer, "it is he! I'll speak to him. He may assist us in our difficulties. And at least my life and honour will be safe in his keeping."

The strangers had now arrived in front of the portico under which Octavio and Diego were standing; and the foremost of them was about to address Octavio with some inquiry as to the place they sought, when the latter dropped his cloak from before his face, and Antonio de Mendoza immediately recognized his friend. After mutual congratulations on this unexpected meeting, Octavio invited Antonio to enter the house, informing him, however, that he was not in a condition to receive

him as he could wish, on account of an unlucky adventure which forced him to keep himself concealed, and which he promised to explain when they were alone together.

As it appeared that they were close upon the spot where Antonio de Mendoza had appointed his messenger to meet him, he declined entering the house till Ernesto should arrive; and the friends presently fell into a conversation, in the course of which Antonio informed Octavio of his having reached Seville that night, with the view of fulfilling on the morrow a marriage contract, into which he had been induced to enter, by the urgent intervention of his family and friends, with a lady residing in Seville, whom he had never seen.

"And yet," continued he, without giving Octavio time to inquire the name and family of his intended bride, "now that the time for tying the irrevocable knot is so near at hand, my courage almost fails me. The truth is, Octavio, if my honour were not so firmly en-

gaged as it is in this matter, I could find in my heart to break the contract at once, and again betake myself to the wars, where, by seeking new adventures, I might perhaps wipe out from my memory one which, the more my present circumstances counsel me to forget it, the more fresh and fair its images grow within me. If you were a lover, Octavio," continued he, "I might perhaps venture to tell you a lover's story, thus recalling it to myself for the last time; for after to-morrow the very memory of it must be buried within me, if I would hope to give my love where it will then be due. But I will not trouble you with the details of a sorrow that must seem fantastical to those who (not being lovers themselves) cannot feel it."

"If a lover," replied Octavio, "and an unhappy one, is the only fit audience for your story, we have met at a lucky moment for both of us; for me, who never had such need of fellowship in my griefs as now: and for you, who cannot have any so great, that I cannot over-match them with greater; as you shall hear when you have related your adventure."

Thus encouraged, Antonio proceeded as follows:

"On the day after that on which the Duke of Alva gained his late victory over the Prince of Orange, a squadron of horse under my command, was despatched from the main body of the army, to cover the Limbourg frontiers, which were then much exposed to inroads from the enemy. We had scarcely reached our destination for the night, when I received intelligence that a party of the enemy had the day before surprised a small convoy of our troops, and made the whole of them prisoners, together with their charge; and that both parties were then at a spot but a very short distance from I took my measures accordingly our station. -planned a surprise—and by daybreak the enemy's party were routed, and the village in our hands.

"As soon as the heat of the office was over. I repaired, to refresh seyself, to a parition, in the garden of the house where the principal officer of the enemy had taken up his quarters; when, on entering it, what was my susprine and horror, to see a female form, of matchless beauty, stretched on the marble floor, seemingly dead. There was something so heavenly in the pale loveliness of the form which lay before me, that, dead as it seemed, I felt a kind of awe-stricken respect on approaching it. I, however, after a few moments' panse, lifted it from the ground, and then instantly percrived that it was not dead, but had swooned, from the effect of some sudden and violent emotion; for the right hand, which had been concealed as it lay on the ground, still grasped a dagger.

"On finding that the beautiful shrine which I had scarcely dared to profane by my touch when I believed it senseless, was tenanted by a living soul, I instantly laid it on a couch which was at hand, and kneeling down beside it, could scarcely refrain from begging forgiveness aloud for the sacrilege I seemed to feel I had been guilty of.

"There I knelt for a considerable, gazing silently on the beautiful vision, and hoping, yet fearing at the same time, that it would presently open its eyes, and look upon me: for if it was thus when seeming dead, what must it be, I thought, when endowed with that life which which was the chief charm of all the forms and faces I had hitherto looked upon?

"At last, after a deep inspiration of the breath, the eyes did open; yet oh! how delighted I was to see them closed again! for they no sooner glanced upon me where I knelt, than a shuddering thrill of horror seemed to run throughout the whole frame, and then it immediately sank back into the insensibility from which it had just awakened.

"After a while the eyes again opened; and, as they once more met mine, how shall I tell the costasy that seized on me, when, instead of closing in seeming horror, as they had done before, they continued gazing, and as they gazed, the whole face became gradually illuminated with an expression of eager and intense joy, which made it almost too bright and beautiful to look upon!

"Thus encouraged, what could I do but address her? In what words I did this I know not, for a sudden ecstasy seemed to seize upon me at the sight of this beautiful creature, gradually recovering her scattered senses, and gazing upon me as I spoke, and listening to every word I uttered, with marks of the most evident and unchecked delight.

"Suffice it, that I explained the circumstances which had brought me to her presence; offered her my protection; and was listening with the most eager joy to her frank acceptance of my aid and guidance under the extraordinary and painful circumstances in which she found herself, and which she was on the point of

explaining to me;—when suddenly, the confused voices of my soldiers were heard without, pronouncing my name vehemently, and calling one another to arms, while the sounds of musketry were distinguishable at no great distance.

"Without waiting even to take leave of my fair charge, I rushed out, and having placed a guard round the pavilion, instantly mustered my men; for I found that an ambush of the enemy had attacked us by surprise, and were on the point of entering the village.

"We met and repulsed them in a short time, but in so doing I was severely wounded, and carried senseless from the field; and on my recovery could learn no tidings whatever of the lady I had left in the pavilion, except that she had been removed from the spot by her friends, on the very day after that on which our first (and last) interview took place.

"Thus, Octavio, was a momentary glimpse of heaven itself opened to my ravished sight, only to be snatched away for ever! Thus was a

beautiful vision (for such it seems) shown to my deceived senses, only to take away the brightness from all after realities! And thus," continued Antonio, "have I been induced, by pure indifference to my future fate, to contract my hand where (I much fear me) I can never give my heart: for, henceforth, all women are alike to me."

"And may I inquire," said Octavio,

"which of our fair dames of Seville it is, on
whom my friend is about to bestow his heartless hand?"

"She is a lady," replied Antonio, "of great virtue, noble, young, and (as I hear) distinguished for her beauty, even among the beauties of Seville. You must know her, doubtless, or at least her brother; she is the sister of ———"

At this moment some one was seen approaching quickly towards the spot where the party were standing; and Octavio instantly retired within the door of his house, without

hearing the conclusion of his friend's sentence, leaving Diego outside with Don Antonio.

The stranger proved to be Ernesto, the confidential servant of Antonio, who had come in search of his master. Diego now retired within the door also, but almost immediately returned, with a message to Antonio, begging him to dismiss his servant as soon as possible.

Ernesto informed Antonio of the result of his interview with Henriquez, and also of his having seen the (supposed) future bride, whose beauty and condescension he described in the most lively terms. He then presented to Antonio the two letters with which he was charged, one from Henriquez, and the other from the lady herself, and also the key of the suite of apartments which Henriquez had allotted to Antonio in his own house.

Ernesto was then dismissed to the posthouse, with orders to convey the luggage to their new lodgings; and Octavio again joined his friend, who proposed that he should imme-



reminding Antonio of his for and they were retiring into the Flora reached the spot, almost and hastily putting the tables into Octavio's hands, bad had moment in perusing them, a matter of the utmost important ness of both.

The party now retired into the on opening and perusing the informed his friend that what must preclude him from them late confidence by a similar or part, as he was summoned mistress at an appointed spot, her on some new emergence.

and that he must therefore instantly go and seek one; for though, he said, there was no one in whose judgment and honour he could so safely confide as in those of Antonio, he could not think of engaging him in an affair which might lead to danger, and which must at any rate occupy his time and attention, at a moment when they were so deeply pledged elsewhere.

To this Antonio would on no account listen, but insisted on accompaning Octavio; urging the danger, as well as the delay, attendant on seeking, at that hour, any other friend; and adding, moreover, that his message to his intended brother-in-law (whom he did not name) had left it quite uncertain whether he should arrive in Seville that night, and that consequently he felt himself free, for a few hours longer at least, to follow that inclination which led him anywhere but to the feet of a new and unknown mistress.

Octavio was too sensible of the urgency of

the case, to be very long in persuading himself to accept this friendly offer; and accordingly, having briefly explained to Antonio the circumstances in which he was placed by the sealous and vindictive persecution of his mistress's brother, who believed him to be his rival in another lady's affections, and whom he dared not undeceive, on account of the unhappy termination of the affray which had arisen out of that mistaken belief, they proceeded together towards the appointed spot, attended by Diego.

CHAPTER III.

RETURNING to the ladies Portia and Camilla, we shall find them leaning from the balcony of Portia's private chamber, which overlooked the back door of the garden, watching the coming of Octavio. This, however, they were pervented from doing by any other than their sense of hearing; for the moon had not yet risen, and what little light had hitherto been furnished by the stars was now completely cut off, by the presence of thick clouds, which covered the whole hemisphere.

While Portia and Camilla, still attended by Portia's waiting woman Flora, were thus watching, and conferring together, in the utmost brother, Don Henriquez, they heard the signal usually given by Octavio to announce his presence beneath the balcony.

Portin instantly descended to the garden, leaving Camilla and Flora above, to give timely notice in case of the dreaded approach of her brother; little thinking that he was at that very moment within a few yards of the gate itself which she was about to open for the admission of her lover. In fact, Henriques and Carlos had stayed later at the Corregidor's than they intended, and finding the way dark, had determined on entering by the back gate through the garden, instead of going round to the front of the house.

Having ascertained that the signal she had heard really was Octavio's, and that he was accompanied by Diego and a friend, Portia proceeded cautiously to the door, and opened it; not, however, without causing a sound which instantly reached the jealous ears of

Henriquez, who stepped up quickly, and was perceived by Diego just in time to prevent the mutual enemies from coming in actual contact with each other. Neither party, however, recognised the persons of the other; and Octavio whispered Diego to walk forward with him, and let the strangers (as he supposed them to be) pass on; while Henriquez, filled in an instant with a thousand suspicions, at hearing his own door unlocked secretly at this hour, stepped up to it cautiously, followed closely by Carlos.

In the mean time Antonio, who had been standing a short space behind, while Octavio went beneath the balcony to give the appointed signal, hearing the door open, and not perceiving anything of his friend, approached it also, and was considering for a moment whether he should enter or not, when a female voice was heard from within the half open door, saying, in a low tone—"Come! come in! what do you stay for?"

At these words, in which Henriquez instantly recognised the voice of his sister Portia, he could no longer contain his fury, and was drawing his sword, and rushing forward without speaking, but was restrained by his more prudent friend, Carlos. During this momentary delay, the door opened fully, and Portia stepped from behind it, and seeing the figure of Antonio in the darkness, said to him—

"You may come in safely, Octavio; I have taken care to ensure timely notice of my cruel brother's coming."

"I am not Octavio, madam," said Antonio; and he was about to explain who he was, when the affrighted Portia exclaimed,

"Not Octavio? Who are you then? And who is that, whose dark shadow I see against the sky?"

Henriquez could contain himself no longer, but drawing his sword, he rushed to the open door, explaining—

"'Tis I, vile woman! your injured and dis-

honoured brother, and his mortal enemy." (pointing to Antonio). "Whoe'er he be, he shall pay this insulting treachery with his life."

On perceiving Henriquez spring forward, Antonio had stepped within the open door; and now, hearing his words, he lost no time in preparing to defend himself; while Portia, at the sound of her brother's voice, had rushed terrified away. Antonio, therefore, was forced to retire within the garden, towards he knew not whither, defending himself from the united attacks of the enraged Henriquez, and his friend Carlos—who joined him as soon as he had complied with Henriquez' desire, of securing the door to prevent an escape.

We are compelled to leave the three combatants to the mercy of the protecting darkness for a few moments, while we return to Octavio; who, fancying that the strangers whom Diego had seen approaching must now have passed out of observation, came back again to the door, and was looking about for

Antonio to accompany him in,—when, what were his feelings at hearing the sound of his friend's voice within the garden, accompanied by the clash of swords, and the threatenings and exclamations of Henriques, and at finding the garden door fast closed!

This was not a state of things to admit of a moment's pause or consideration, as to the course to be adopted. Octavio felt that he must instantly fly to his friend's assistance at all risks; and therefore, bidding Diego follow him, he by the aid of some shrubs mounted the wall of the garden, and dropping on the other side, joined the combatants.

At this juncture Don Carlos, more prudent than Henriquez, called aloud for the servants of the house to bring lights and assistance; while Henriquez, growing still more ungovernable in his rage, was rushing forward in the darkness, when, stumbling over something which lay in the path, he fell, and lost his sword. There was just light enough afforded now, by the rising moon, to admit of Carlos perceiving that it was his friend who had fallen. He therefore immediately ceased attacking the opposite party, in order to afford assistance to Henriquez, and search for his sword; and in this interval Portia came from her concealment, and beseeched Octavio in the most earnest manner to make a last and desperate effort to secure her, by instant flight, from the future tyranny of her brother.

Antonio, who was watching the whole scene, joined in urging this as the best step which circumstances admitted; and accordingly, in a few moments all the three were safely outside the garden walls, and on their way towards Octavio's house, whither they at once determined on repairing.

They had scarcely passed fairly beyond the confines of the garden, when Carlos, perceiving, by the silence, that the intruding party had fled, urged upon Henriquez the instant neces-

Portia; while Carlos himself promised to follow the fugitives, and if possible trace their steps to their place of retreat, and thus secure the means of revenging the insult and outrage which had just been so fortunately interrupted.

The defeated rage of Henriquez had still left him sense enough to see the reasonableness of this advice; and accordingly he followed it, leaving Carlos to pursue the fugitives;—in which enterprise he was not a little assisted by the blundering cowardice of Diego, Octavio's valet, who, instead of following his master's orders of climbing the wall and accompanying him into the garden, prudently anticipated that the affair was pretty sure to end in fighting, and therefore determined on keeping himself out of harm's way, by obeying only the first half of his master's directions. In fact, during the whole of the scene, from the descent of Octavio into the garden, to his flight with

Portia at the door, Diego had been safely seated at the top of the wall, watching, as well as the darkness would permit, the progress of events, and (to do him justice) ready to take advantage of any occasion that might present itself, of assisting his master's views, always provided he could do so with perfect safety to his own person.

Seeing, therefore, the flight of his master and Portia through the garden door, Diego immediately descended, and followed them closely; and perceiving, as he did so, that he himself was followed at a short distance by another person, whom he took to be his master's friend Antonio, instead of giving the alarm to Octavio, he kept making signals, by which Carlos was enabled finally to trace the whole party into the house of Octavio, where they took refuge.

This, however, was not effected without Diego's discovering his mistake at the last moment; but thinking that it was then too late

280

CRATEWORTH.

for remedy, and moreover fearing to disclose his blunder to his master, Carlos was suffered to bear off his knowledge of their place of retreat, unknown to all the rest of the party.

CHAPTER IV.

WE must now return to the Lady Camilla and Flora, (Portia's waiting-woman), whom we left keeping anxious watch in the balcony of the Lady Portia's chamber. There they had waited during the whole of the scene just described, moved to an agony of apprehension and uncertainty, as to the nature of the events that were taking place in the garden beneath them, yet not daring to move from the balcony, either to confirm or dissipate their fears. At length when the momentary absence of all the parties engaged in the affray below had left the scene of it in utter silence—a silence which seemed

which had preceded it—Camilla could bear her situation no longer, and she determined to descend into the garden, and try if they could ascertain what had become of Portia: for as to all the rest of the party, the extreme darkness of the night had not permitted them even to guess of whom it consisted, and they could only be sure that Henriques formed one of it, from the exclamations of rage and passion that were perpetually escaping him during the affray.

After some hesitation, therefore, and not without a dread which nothing but her affectionate anxiety as to the fate of her cousin Portia could overcome, Camilla cautiously descended into the garden, preceded by Flora. But they had scarcely issued from the door which opened from Portia's suite of apartments, when Flora retreated in great haste, exclaiming that she perceived Don Henriquez

coming towards them, with his sword drawn, and attended by servants bearing lights.

They had scarcely time to conceal themselves behind the open door, before Henriquez reached the spot, apparently furious with rage, exclaiming against his sister in the most vehement language, as a stain to his house and honour, and vowing to sacrifice her life the instant he could recover possession of her. From this the trembling listeners at least gathered that she had escaped his fury for the present; and they had scarcely time to congratulate themselves on this fact, before their fears were aroused afresh, and redoubled, by Henriquez calling loudly on Flora, and sending some of the servants in search of her.

Hearing this, Flora cautiously mounted a few of the stairs which they had just descended; and then, returning again in seeming haste, presented herself before Henriquez, whose own rage and agitation were luckily too strong to permit him to perceive the effects that mingled fear for her own safety, and anxiety for that of her mistress, were producing upon the trembling Abigail.

Henriquez merely inquired, in a few abrupt words, where her mistress was; and receiving for answer that she had left her chamber about half an hour before, for the purpose of descending into the garden, his worst fears were confirmed by this intelligence, and he took no further notice of Flora, who again retired behind the door where Camilla was still concealed; and Henriquez was passing on, intending to search that part of the house which had been assigned to his expected guest, Antonio de Mendoza, when Don Carlos entered the garden by the back door.

From the very first words uttered by Don Carlos on joining Henriquez, the Lady Camilla (who recognized her brother's voice) perceived that it now behoved them to listen with the utmost care to all that might pass.

Carlos informed his friend that, by the unconscious aid of one of the party, he had been completely successful in tracing the fugitives to their place of retreat; which he described as the second house beyond the church, in the street of Saint Jago; and he added that there could unfortunately be no doubt of Portia having accompanied them, as the fellow who had aided his discovery of their retreat by at first mistaking him for one of his own party, had repeatedly boasted, as he bad him come on, how triumphantly his master had carried the lady off.

The first impulse of Henriquez on hearing this at once welcome and unwelcome news, was instantly to collect his people together, and attack the house where his sister had been conveyed. But this wild project was with some difficulty over-ruled by the calculating

pradence of Curios, who represented to Henriques the folly of risking his own person, as well as the heavy penalty of the law, in the mere hasty, and, in all probability, unsuccessful attempt to effect that which the law itself, if properly applied, would enable him to accomplish with certainty as well as safety, and with almost as little delay as would attend the plan proposed by Henriquez. Carlos added, that he would go instantly to the Corregidor, and claim the assistance of himself and his officers in securing the fugitives, on the plea of their having attacked the person of Henriquez on his own premises, and severely wounded one of his servants, in a felonious attempt to stain the honour of a noble house, by carrying off the Lady Portia.

After much argument and persuasion, Henriquez having reluctantly consented to adopt the above plan of action, Carlos instantly proceeded to the Corregidor's, to put it in practice; while

Camilla and Flora, who had overheard all that past between the disputants, as promptly determined that there was not a moment to be lost in endeavouring, at any risk, to inform Octavio and Portia of what was going on; leaving them to arrange their measures accordingly.

END OF VOLUME II.

LUNDON.

PARCINGS AND CO, PRINTERS.

CT. WIRTING LAND.

CHATSWORTH;

OR,

THE ROMANCE OF A WEEK.

EDITED BY THE

AUTHOR OF "TREMAINE," "DE VERE," &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER,

1844.

GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

LONDON:
HANDON AND CO., PRINTERS,
St. Martin's Lane.

CHATSWORTH.

THE ROMANCE OF AN EVENING.

CHAPTER V.

WHILE Don Carlos proceeds on his errand to the Corregidor's, and Flora hastens (which she instantly did) on hers to the house of Octavio, we must return to Antonio de Mendoza.

As soon as he had assisted in safely housing Octavio and his mistress, it occurred to him that, as the presence of a third party was not likely to be very welcome under the circumstances in which the lovers were now placed, and as he did not see any immediate danger of their retreat being discovered, or their happiness interrupted, he might as well attend to

LONDON
PARNISON AND CO., PRINTERS,
ST MARTIN'S LANE.

CHATSWORTH;

OR,

THE ROMANCE OF A WEEK.

EDITED BY THE

AUTHOR OF "TREMAINE," "DE VERE," &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1844.



LONDON:
HARRISON AND CO., PRINTERS,
ST. MARTIN'S LANE.

CHATSWORTH.

THE ROMANCE OF AN EVENING.

CHAPTER V.

WHILE Don Carlos proceeds on his errand to the Corregidor's, and Flora hastens (which she instantly did) on hers to the house of Octavio, we must return to Antonio de Mendoza.

As soon as he had assisted in safely housing Octavio and his mistress, it occurred to him that, as the presence of a third party was not likely to be very welcome under the circumstances in which the lovers were now placed, and as he did not see any immediate danger of their retreat being discovered, or their happiness interrupted, he might as well attend to

his own affairs, and proceed at once to get through the ordeal of his first interview with his affianced bride and her brother. He therefore immediately went to the post-house, in search of Ernesto, who was acquainted with the way to Henriquez' residence, and who had also received the key of the suite of apartments assigned to Don Antonio, in case of his arriving at an hour when he might choose at once to retire to rest.

Antonio having found Ernesto, they proceeded at once to the house of Henriquez; and just as Carlos had left Henriquez in the garden, to go in search of the Corregidor (as above related), a servant entered, and informed his master that a cavalier, named Don Antonio de Mendoza, was in the inner hall, waiting to see him.

This blow seemed to crown at once the rage and disappointment of Henriquez. To think that the noble Antonio should arrive, to wed his sister, at the very moment when he had received

CHATSWORTH.

the news of her disgraceful flight with another, and while he was still uncertain as to the results of that flight, and even ignorant of the person with whom she had fled, so completely exhausted the small stock of patience which the prudent counsels of Carlos had infused into him, that he felt it impossible to see Antonio with any chance of being able to conceal the emotions which agitated him. As, moreover, it was indispensable to conceal from Antonio, what had happened, at least while there was any hope of the mischief being repaired by the interference of the Corregidor, Henriquez determined at all events not to see Antonio for the present. He, therefore, desired the servant to inform him that his master, not expecting his arrival that night, was not at home; but that all things were prepared for his reception, in the suite of apartments the key of which had been given to the servant who had announced his possible arrival.

Antonio, on the other hand, was not a little

surprised at being so long left alone in the hall, and at the air of mingled confusion and desolation which seemed to reign throughout the house of his intended brother-in-law, especially as Ernesto informed him that when he had visited it scarcely two hours before, it was thronged with domestics, and a model of order and propriety.

By the time the servant returned who had been sent to announce his arrival, Antonio and Ernesto had wandered into an ante-room which led out of the hall, and which was lighted as if company had lately quitted it; and there the servant found them on his return, and obeyed the directions he had received.

"Why, sure," said Antonio to Ernesto, after he had waited here for a short time, somewhat impatiently, and not very well knowing whether to retire to his own apartments, or wait the coming of Henriquez, or return at once to Octavio,—whom he determined at all events to see again that night, in case his assistance might be needed—"why, sure, Ernesto, you have led me to the wrong house! This can never be the mansion of my intended brother-in-law Don Henriquez, and his lovely sister, for such you have described her. At any rate, if the lady no more resembles the picture you have drawn of her than the house does that which you say you visited two hours ago, my bridal is like to be as cold as my reception."

"For the surpassing beauty of the lady, Sir, I'll be sworn," said Ernesto; "and by the same token I am not like to have mistaken the house; for this I'll swear is the very chamber—adjoining to that of the lady herself—in which I lately saw her, attended by a pretty waiting-maid, whom she called Flora, and by a stately lady in a veil. Nay, Sir," continued Ernesto, stepping towards the half-open door of an inner apartment, "if I am not marvellously deceived, yonder is the lady herself, lying on a couch. Her back is turned this way; but that air and shape are not to be mistaken. It is

shel and see, Sir, she rises, and is coming this way."

The reader has been apprised of the accidental circumstance by which Antonio's servant, Ernesto, had been led to mistake Camilla for Portia, at his first interview with her; and also of Camilla having retired alone to the chamber of Portia, as soon as Flora had left the house to inform Octavio and her mistress of what had passed in the garden, relative to the discovery of their retreat, and the measures of Henriquez and Carlos in consequence. Here Camilla was, then, waiting, in a state of the most painful anxiety, for the return of Flora; and here Ernesto beheld her, and immediately recognised the lady whom he had lately addressed as his future mistress.

He had scarcely done so, when Camilla rose from the couch on which she was reclining, and laying down a book that she held in her hand, came forward towards the chamber where Antonio and Ernesto were waiting.

Antonio, finding from the last words of Ernesto, that he was on the point, as it appeared, of standing so unexpectedly in the presence of his affianced bride, was collecting his somewhat fluttered thoughts for the occasion, and did not look at Camilla till she had fairly entered the outer apartment:—when, what were the feelings of both—the rush of mingled surprise and ecstasy that seemed to hurry through his heart; and the throng of anxious sensations,—whether of fear or of hope she could scarcely tell,—which took instant possession of hers—on their mutually beholding,—she, the saviour of her honour, and the subject of her secret thoughts and dreams from the first moment that she saw him; he, the only being who had ever moved his soul to other thoughts than those of honour and renown, but to whom even honour and renown themselves had become as nothing, in the presence of her all-absorbing image, which haunted him like a bright vision, day and night,

For several momenta both remained silent, and as if spell-bound by the variety of emotions that seemed to crowd upon and impede each other; and Antonio, for his part, entirely lost all memory of place, circumstance, and name: and only felt that he was once more in the presence of her who had seemed to fix his destiny the first moment he beheld her, but whom he had involuntarily taught himself to believe he should never behold again—nay, almost that he had never beheld her at all, in sober reality, but only as a vision of the brain!

At length Antonio spoke, but still without addressing himself to Camilla.

"Do I see aright?" exclaimed he, "or is this but a mocking vision of the mind, sent at this moment, to tax me with my broken allegiance to that bright being whose form it imitates, and for whom (though I must never behold her again) I ought still to have kept holy those secret vows which I then plighted, on the altar of my own ravished heart?"

At this (to him) altogether unintelligible rhapsody, Ernesto became almost as much perplexed as the rest of the party.

"Vision! Sir!" exclaimed he; "why this is the Lady Portia, as I told you before—the beautiful sister of Don Henriquez, your intended bride, and my future mistress."

Finding that his master still remained silent, (though a total change of expression, from a wondering curiosity, to a dawning of intense delight, took place in his countenance, as he kept gazing on the lady,) Ernesto turned to Camilla.

"Madam," said he, with a somewhat exagerated show of deference and respect, "this is my master, Don Antonio de Mendoza, whom your ladyship's brother, Don Henriquez, expected to-night, and for whom I was honoured with your ladyship's commands some two hours ago. Had not your ladyship better speak to him? for he seems so rapt away from himself (by the sudden sight of your ladyship's beauty,

no doubt), that he does not seem to be aware in whose presence he stands."

"Heaven and earth!" exclaimed Antonio, pessionately—his tongue once more regaining its office—" is it possible that my fate, which I have long been impiously bewaiting, can have worked this miracle of happiness in my favour, and that the only being I ever have loved or could have loved, is the one destined to be mine? If this be a truth, Lady, oh! confirm it to me with your own lips—else I could not trust to it, though it were told me by a messenger from heaven!"

The generous and gentle Camilla, who had by this time somewhat recovered from the first surprise of seeing Antonio, perceived that she had a most difficult part to act, if she would at once assist the views of her cousin Portia, and yet not destroy her own hopes, which were so delightfully revived within her by the words of Antonio. At all events she determined not to undeceive him as to her name; and for the rest, she thought it, upon the whole, best to escape as soon as possible from his presence, lest the happy mistake into which he had fallen, should not have time to work its own effects, before it was discovered by the return of Henriquez, or by any other untoward event.

While Camilla was pausing on these considerations, Antonio grew impatient of her silence, and again exclaimed—

"Oh, speak to me, Lady! Be pleased to confirm my bliss, or to dispel it—for these doubts, that throng upon me at your silence, are worse than the worst certainties that can displace them. May I believe that you will be mine—and that your heart is not wholly without those feelings towards your servant, with which his has burnt, almost to consuming, towards you, since the moment that he was so blest in serving you?"

Camilla had by this time gathered up her scattered thoughts, and she replied,—

"I should be unworthy of the vast service you once rendered me, Sir, if I did not still feel-as I ever have, and ever shall-the deepest gratitude towards him who rendered it—a gratitude which is enhanced, to a degree that it perhaps becomes me not, under my present circumstances, to express, by the sentiments which you have just been pleased to express towards me. My own sense of justice does not permit me to say less than this; and the generosity of Don Antonio de Mendoza will not require me to say more, at an accidental meeting of this kind, which should not in strictness have taken place, and which, therefore, must not be prolonged in the absence of my brother. Permit me to retire; which, however, I will not do without adding, that this meeting, strange and unexpected as it is, has given me the sincerest joy, if it were only from the occasion it has afforded me of saying, that the happiness of the person to whose valour and generosity I owe so much, will always be dearer to me than my own."

Saying this, Camilla retired into the inner apartment from whence she had come, not without congratulating herself upon having preserved her own truth and delicacy, and possibly secured her future happiness, without in the smallest degree compromising the interests of her cousin Portia.

•		•	

CHAPTER VI.

Camilla's words had left Antonio in an ecstasy of delight; which, however was speedily and somewhat inopportunely interrupted, by the abrupt entry of Henriquez, who, not expecting to find any one in this apartment, was passing hastily through it, and did not perceive Antonio till it was too late to retire and avoid him.

The confusion into which Henriquez was thrown by this unexpected encounter, was too evident to pass without observation by Antonio—who, however, attributed it to the same cause (whatever that might be) which

had produced the strange alteration described by Ernesto as having taken place in the appearance of the house and family, since his visit to them in the early part of the evening. But Antonio was too fully possessed by his own thoughts and feelings to pay much attention to mere outward appearances, with which, moreover, it did not seem that he himself was at all personally concerned. He therefore received the embarrassed greetings of Henriquez, without particular notice; and as the latter was still collected enough in his thoughts to know that he must at all events conceal, for the present, what he deemed the disgraceful flight of his sister Portia, he began to make numerous apologies for the state in which Antonio found his house and family-with a view to induce his immediately taking up his abode for the night in the distant suite of apartments which had been assigned to him: thus gaining time, till the morning at least, to repair, if possible, the fatal mischiefs that the last two hours had brought about.

"Don Antonio will readily conceive," said
he, "the embarrassment I feel, at sceing him
at a moment like this—when extraordinary
circumstances (which I will fully explain
hereafter) have thrown my house and family
into a state of disorder ill fitted for the due
reception of so noble a guest. You must
have been surprised," he continued, growing
more embarrassed as he spoke—"you could
have little expected—"

"Little indeed!" exclaimed Antonio, interrupting him eagerly, and attributing his hesitation to the circumstance of his having been acquainted with the previous meeting between Antonio and his supposed sister— "Little did I expect to find that the Lady Portia, sister to Don Henriquez—"

"Hell and fury! he knows all then!" exclaimed Henriquez inwardly, at the same YOL III. time starting, and putting on a look of mingled rage and embarrassment, which effectually stopped Antonio, for the moment, from proceeding in what he was about to eay, relative to the adventure on the Limbourg frontiers.

Meanwhile Henriquez, thinking that the words of Antonio could refer to nothing but the late flight of his sister Portia, and that consequently all was lost, was about to say that the peculiar circumstances in which he was placed, must compel him to defer an explanation of the extraordinary affair till the morning, when Antonio eagerly interrupted him, by exclaiming—

"Oh, my dear Don Henriquez, all explanation is unnecessary. I have just been made so more than happy by the sight of your beautiful and noble sister, and by her gracious reception of my suit, that I would have begged your permission (late as it is) once more to throw myself at her feet, and sanctioned by your presence, offer the homage of those vows which her delicacy would not permit her to listen to for the first time during your absence. But the truth is, an affair of the utmost urgency, in which the honour and happiness of a dear friend is nearly concerned, compels me to quit your house for a short period. In the mean time, my servant here, Ernesto, has the key of the apartments you have been good enough to assign me, and he will attend me, in case I should be detained beyond the usual hour of your family retiring to rest. Farewell till the morning, Commend me to your virtuous and accomplished sister, and bid her believe that nothing can exceed the bliss which the unexpected sight of her has caused within me, but that which must attend the hour which makes her wholly mine. Once more farewell!"

And he immediately departed; leaving Henriquez in a state of utter astonishment at his words, and unable to collect from them any distinct impression whatever, as to Antonio's knowledge or ignorance of what had lately happened.

"The sight of her!" he exclaimed,—" what can he mean? why be never has seen her! Her delicacy—virtue—the hour which makes her his?—What can he mean?"

Then, after a few moments' pause, leadded, with an expression of unutterable rage on his countenance—

"Is he mocking me? If I thought——" and he put his hand to his sword as he uttered the words. "And his going out again at this late hour——"

At this moment Henriquez was interrupted, and his whole thoughts turned into a new channel, by the sudden entrance of his friend Don Carlos, who, with marks of the utmost haste on his countenance, bade Henriquez instantly follow him, as the Corregidor was ready with his men, and not a moment was to be lost in endeavouring to secure the fugitives.

Henriquez was at first following his friend without a word: but just as they were leaving the apartment, a sudden thought seemed to strike him, and he turned back, saying—

"Stay! I must return for a moment to my sister's chamber."

"Return!" exclaimed Carlos, eagerly, "what madness! Why a moment's delay may be fatal to our hopes—the villains may escape, and laugh at us for ever! Come away, I beseech you!"

And he almost forced Henriquez to follow him; thus leaving the Lady Camilla safe in the apartment of her friend Portia.



CHAPTER VII.

We must now return to the party at Octavio's house. Cowardly and blundering as Diego was in performing his services, he was still faithful to the interests of his master; and therefore, when he found out the fatal error he had fallen into, in mistaking one of Don Henriquez' party for his master's friend, Don Antonio, and thus permitting their retreat to be traced, he, after some delay, apprised his master of what had happened.

This information threw the whole party once more into the utmost difficulty and consternation; for, knowing the hasty and vindictive character of Henriquez, and, more-

Corregidor, he could not for a moment doubt that, ere long, measures would be taken, against which Octavio could not hope to offer any successful resistance, and that, in fact, nothing was left but a second flight. But whither could be fly at that hour of the night, without the certainty of meeting with impediments which the unfortunate necessity of concealing his name and station would prevent the possibility of his overcoming?

And even if they could hope to escape observation, where could be place the Lady Portia, so as to keep her innocence free from those scandals it would have escaped if he could have married her forthwith; as, but for this unhappy discovery of their retreat, he had intended to do? At any rate, whatever became of him, something must be thought of as to the disposal of Portia. He therefore ordered Diego to fetch a sedan chair instantly.

The lovers had scarcely had time to bewail

their perverse fate—thus in sight of happiness, and yet compelled to suffer an 'immediate and perhaps final separation, as the best that they could hope for—when Diego returned, saying that it was past the appointed hour for the chairmen to be in attendance, and that though he had found some of them over their wine and cards, they swore they would not stir for all the Dons in Seville.

There was now evidently nothing left but for Octavio himself to go in search of them, and either force or bribe them to accompany him. He therefore commanded Diego on no pretence to open the door during his absence, to any but his friend Antonio; and then he immediately hurried forth towards the rendezvous of the chairmen.

Octavio had scarcely turned the corner of the street, before Antonio, coming in an opposite direction, reached the door, attended by a servant, and was instantly admitted by Diego. Portia immediately explained to

Antonio, as her lover's friend, the perilous situation in which they were now placed, by the blander of Diego in permitting their retreat to be traced; and also the unlucky cause of Octavio's momentary absence; and while Autonio was warmly offering his services, and considering how he could best assist in disposing of the Lady Portia on Octavio's return, a hurried sound was heard at the outer door, and immediately after, Flora entered the apartment, almost speechless with haste and anxiety, and scarcely able to explain, except in substance, what she and Camilla had overheard in the garden, as to the discovery of their retreat, and to assure them that in fact the Corregidor and his people must at that very moment be on their way, to force an entrance into the house, on the plea of the parties concealed within it having attacked Don Henriquez in his own garden, with an intent to murder him.

This news raised the misery of Portia to

its height; since it was evident to her, as well to Antonio, that she must not even wait for the return of Octavio, if she would hope to escape being again placed in the hands of her cruel brother. Still, however, she felt that, to act for herself under these circumstances, desperate as they were, was impossible; and she could only look with an appealing sadness to Antonio—as if her fate, as well as that of her lover, now depended solely upon him.

After seeming to consider within himself for a few moments, Antonio at length said:—

"It is evident, Madam, that if you stay till my friend Octavio's return, all will be lost. Yet to urge your instant flight, and leave him to the peril of the circumstances that surround him, is what the love with which I see you honour my noble friend would forbid me to do,—but that I think I see a hope of your both still escaping from the dangers that (I must say) so justly alarm you. Will you then trust your person and safety to the

become and conduct of your husband's friend? for so I still hope you will speedily call Don Octavio. Hard by I have a suite of apartments, provided for my reception, in the house of my intended brother-in-law, a noble gentleman of this city. There, if it please you, I will instantly conduct you. Beneath the protection of his roof you will not only be safe from immediate danger of discovery, but when discovery does (as I fear it must) take place, his name and influence may greatly aid your views, and those of my friend Octavio. Besides which," added be, seeing a momentary fear and hesitation pass across the anxious countenance of Portia,-"the noble and virtuous lady whom I hope to-morrow to call my wife, will, I am confident, be happy to offer you that sympathy and care which none but a female heart can duly feel and render to your distressed condition."

This last consideration at once determined Portia to accept the offer of Antonio, and sur-

render herself entirely to his guidance and direction. After dispatching Diego, therefore, in search of his master, to inform him of what had been determined on, and bidding Ernesto and Flora wait on the spot, the former to conduct Octavio, if circumstances should permit, to the apartments of Antonio, and Flora to watch his motions, and bring word of his retreat, in case he should be obliged again to conceal himself,-Antonio and Portia proceeded together towards the house of Henriquez; not, however, without making so many turnings and windings, to avoid encountering any one whom they saw approaching at a distance, that Portia presently lost all knowledge of the direction in which Antonio was leading her.



CHAPTER VIII

LEAVING the above-named party to pursue their anxious way, we must still remain with the party who are keeping watch at the house of Octavio.

The situation of Ernesto and Flora induced them very soon to scrape acquaintance togegether; and the former scarcely had time to expatiate on the gallant generosity of his master, Don Antonio, in quitting one Lady Portia (his own bride), almost at the moment of his first introduction to her, in order to assist another Lady Portia (the bride of his friend); and Flora herself had scarcely done wondering at the curious coincidence of the two ladies bear-

ing the same name,—when Occavio returned, necessary and enguely demanded his mistress.

He was at first a little perplexed by the explanation of her absence, which was afforded by Ernesto; for Dorgo had missed him on the way, and was not yet returned. But when Flora added her testimmy, as to the absolute pecessity of the step, and repeated to him the conversation between Don Henriquez and Don Carlos, which she and the Lady Camilla. had overbeard in the garden, he became reconciled to the arrangement, and at once determined to follow his friend's advice, and repair to the offered asylum of his apartments. He, therefore, immediately entered the chair he had procured for the conveyance of Portia; desired Ernesto to conduct the men to his master's apartments; drew the curtains closely round him; and the whole party were presently on the move, followed closely by Diego and Flora.

They had scarcely turned the corner of the street in which the house of Octavio was situated, before a noise of many voices was heard behind them, as if in pursuit; and a few moments after, the whole party were arrested by the officers of the Corregidor, attended by that functionary himself, and also by Don Carlos; Henriquez having been with much difficulty persuaded, by the joint entreaties and arguments of his two friends, to remain at the house of the Corregidor, till news should be sent him of the success of their mission; for they justly considered, that if his hasty and violent temper did not wholly frustrate their hopes of securing the party who had so insulted his pride and wounded his family honour, it would at least endanger the attainment of that safe and complete vengeance which the unfortunate events of the early part of the evening seemed to have placed within their reach.

As the chair stopped, which was conveying VOL. III.

Octavio, and the voices of those without reached his ear, he but too well guessed the cause of the confusion; and his heart sunk within him, as he almost yielded up the last hope that had hitherto supported him through the conflicting events of the evening. Still, however, he determined not to risk, by a rash and hasty discovery of himself, and an appeal to what would evidently be a hopeless wholence, any chance of escape that might yet exist, in the shrewdness and promptitude o Flora, and the faithful sagacity of Diego. both of whom he knew must be in attendance. He, therefore, sat perfectly still in the chair, with the curtains closely drawn around him and listened with the utmost anxiety to all that passed.

As the Corregidor and his party had not actually seen the chair and its attendants come out from the house which had been pointed out as the retreat of the fugitives of whom they were in search, they did not think it prudent to

proceed to extremities, without first questioning the attendants, and thus ascertaining who
it was that the chair contained. Accordingly,
while some of the officers placed themselves
on each side the chair, to prevent the possibility of its occupant escaping, the Corregidor
proceeded to question Diego and Flora.

As for Diego, Don Carlos had, at the first -encounter, recognised him as the confidential servant of Octavio; so that little more seemed -necessary to convince them that they were right in their conjectures, as to the persons of the rest of the party. But just as the Corregidor was ordering one of his men to lift up the veil by which Flora's face and the greater part of her person were concealed, it occurred to Don Carlos that, as there was little doubt this must be Portia herself, (while Octavio, as feeling the more occasion for strict concealment, had himself been persuaded to occupy the chair,) it would be well to spare to all

parties an unnecessary exposure; as all they sought at present was, to secure the persons of the fugitives. He, therefore, begged of the Corregidor that he might be permitted to speak to the lady privately, and apprise her of the necessity of submitting herself at once to the authority of the Corregidor.

In the mean time Flore, quick as she was at expedients, had scarcely collected her scattered thoughts, and was still uncertain as to the course she should take, when the Corregidor prevented his officer from lifting her veil, and Carlos stepped up to her and was about to speak; but she interrupted him by stammering forth, in a confused manner,

"It is I, Sir, Flora; pray save us from disgrace, Sir! My poor lady desired me to-

"Enough, enough, Flora," said Carlos, interrupting her, "speak softly; I understand. Bid your lady sit still in the chair, and say nothing; and I'll try what can be done to prevent further mischief and exposure from his unhappy adventure."

He then stepped up to the Corregidor, and explained to him his supposed discovery while Flora whispered to Octavio that they mistook him for her mistress, and begged him for the present to remain passive, at least till it should appear whither they proposed to convey the chair.

It now became evident to Don Carlos and the Corregidor, that though they had secured the chief object of their search, the offending party had again escaped them for the present They, therefore, dispatched some officers back o the house of Octavio, to secure all whom they should find there; and then proceeded to consult on the most eligible mode of disposing of the fair prisoner whom (as they thought) they had secured.

The two things which, above all others, they must seek to avoid on behalf of the Lady

Portia were, the exposure of her name and person to strangers, and the immediate fury of her incensed brother. And, as it was clear that, under all the circumstances, the matter had better, if possible, be hushed up, so far as related to the Lady Portia, it was at last determined on, that the most effectual means of bringing this about would be, to carry her to the house of Don Carlos himself, who was her near kinsman, and where she would remain in the society, and under the immediate protection, of his sister, and her own friend and cousin, the Lady Camilla.



left the remainder of the party to pursue their way to the house of the latter, which, as we have before stated, adjoined that of Don Henriquez.

As for Octavio himself, Flora took care to intimate to him all that was going forward; and as he knew the naturally generous and honourable disposition of Don Carlos, and moreover felt that the unhappy circumstances in which he was placed left him nothing but a choice between evils that seemed almost equally desperate, he determined on permitting himself to be carried to the house of Don Carlos, and endeavouring, when there, to conciliate his good offices, by affording him a frank explanation of all that had taken place relative to his passion for the Lady Portia, and her willing flight with him, from the tyranny of her brother.



CHAPTER IX.

In the mean time, Don Antonio had safely conducted Portia herself to the apartments. which had been assigned him in the house of Don Henriquez; while the close veil in which the lady was wrapped, and the partial darkness, (to say nothing of the anxious fears which must have wholly absorbed her attention during the way,) effectually prevented her from observing whither she had been led:

As Ernesto had been left with Flora at the house of Octavio, Antonio himself had taken possession of the key which commanded the private entrance to the apartment assigned him in the house of Henriquez. He therefore, to avoid exciting attention to

his return, entered without knocking; and having assured Portia that she might now consider herself in perfect security within those walls, he left her for a few moments, in order to procure lights, adding, as he went out, that if she was not already retired to rest, he would immediately inform his affianced wife, the Lady Portia, of her arrival and misfortunes, and engage her spendy attendance.

In a few moments Antonio returned with lights; and Portia had scarcely time to ask him (as she did with some surprise) whether she had heard aright, that the lady to whose kindness she was to be indebted, was named Portia, and to learn in reply that it was so,—when Antonio begged to be again excused for a few moments, saying that he would almost immediately return to her, accompanied by that lady.

On being again left alone, Portia's thoughts were for a few moments turned aside from the

extreme difficulty and painfulness of her situation, by the singular circumstance of her being thus about to receive the protection and good offices of a person bearing her own name. "But though our names are one, how sadly different our fates!" thought she; "I, separated from the man I leve—perhaps for even—and surrounded on all sides by danger, difficulty, and perhaps open shame and disgrace; —while she is on the point of being united to a noble and generous husband, whose love for her may be safely judged of: by the generous sympathy which he so evidently feels for the misfortunes and miseries of others!"

Self-absorbed in thoughts and reflections like these, Portia had scarcely as yet moved her eyes from the spot on which they fell, as she seated herself when Antonio last; left the room. She now, however, looked around, and as she did so, started; for what was her mingled horror and astonishment, on perceix-

ing that she was actually in the house of her own brother, Henriquez.

Portia could scarcely credit her senses at first; but when she was no longer able to doubt them, she almost gave herself up to utter despair. Her first impulse was, to believe that she had been inveigled back into her cruel brother's power, by some one devoted to his interests, and who had yet contrived, by some means or other, to gain the entire confidence of her lover, Octavio.

This last thought deeply aggravated her fears, since it seemed to point at the almost inevitable destruction of Octavio himself: for

was quite evident, from what she had seen pass between them during the course of the evening, that he placed the most unlimited reliance on the aid and counsel of this Antonio. But how to act in this sad emergency?—and with whom should she consult?—for there could be no doubt (she thought) that now she had once more fallen into her bro-

ther's power, she should be totally cut off from the society of her friend Camilla, and also from the aid which she might otherwise have received from the plans and devices of her faithful Flora.

Filled with the sad and bitter reflections which came thronging upon her from this new misfortune, Portia at last almost gave herself up to a kind of wilful despair; and bursting into a passion of tears, she covered her face with her handkerchief, and seemed to abandon all hope of again escaping from the unnatural tyranny of her brother.

She had sat but a few moments in that attitude, when Antonio re-entered, leading in Camilla, who, it will be recollected, was left anxiously waiting the return of her cousin Portia, in that lady's apartment in her brother's house. The countenance of Camilla seemed to be expressive of some susprise as she entered; which, however, passed away as Antonio addressed her.

"I hope I need not assure you, madam," said be, "that I am fully aware no mere words of mine can sufficiently excuse the Therty I am taking, in thus early introducing to your temporary protection and good offices one who is a total stranger to you. But I trust that the virtues and misfortunes of this lady will plead my excuse for a step which mothing but the most peculiar chromostances could have induced me to take. I will leave it to this lady berself to relate to you the unhappy situation in which she is placed; for it is of so pressing a nature, that I must instantly seek your noble brother, with a view to eugage his advice and influence, in extricating her from the perils which surround her. I will only add further, that she is the affianced bride of my most dear and valued friend."

So saying, he turned round and quitted the apartment; and almost at the same instant Portia removed the handkerchief from befor

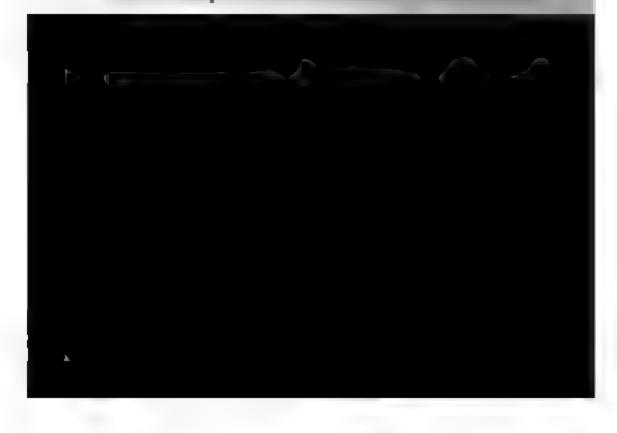
her face, and she and her cousin Camilla recognized each other!

The wonder and perplexity of each were raised to their height by this extraordinary encounter. Camilla, however, had presence of mind enough to perceive that, from whatever inexplicable mistake the meeting might have been brought about, the good that might 'be hoped for from it must inevitably be frustrated, if Antonio should succeed in finding Henriquez, and consulting with him on the matter. She therefore instantly called to him to return; but his quick good-nature had carried him out of hearing, and it was evident that the friends had nothing left but to consult with each other, as to what was next to be done, in order to secure Portia from again falling into the hands of her brother.

First, however, they could not avoid entering into a few mutual explanations, in regard to the singular events of the evening, which had, after at first so strangely separating them, now brought them so still more strangely together again.

The reader having, in virtue of his ubiquity, been present at all the events referred to in these explanations, need not be troubled with a repetition of the explanations themselves. But it may be well to remind him of their result, so far as they affected the future plans and prospects of the two friends who are now before him.

In the first place, then, it was now clear to Portia, that the person who had just assisted her to escape from the hands of her brother



the Limbourg frontier, and to whom she had so irrevocably given her affections.

In the next place, it was evident that the mistake arising out of the accident of the borrowed veil, at the interview between the ladies and Antonio's servant Ernesto, was still acting upon Antonio, and that he fully believed Camilla (and not Portia) to be his affianced bride, and the sister of Don Henriquez. It was equally evident, to Camilla at least, that when he discovered the mistake, he would instantly abandou his contract with Henriquez, at whatever risk or cost, and continue his allegiance to her; which allegiance according to his own assurances, had only been laid aside, from the supposed impossibility of his ever again being in a situation to offer it, and from that utter disappointment of heart and hope which made him indifferent to what might be the colour or aspect of his future lot.

With regard to this latter point, however, vol. 111.



Or revenge for her reject Camilla fully detailed a between herself and Anto nition of her as the wake ture on the frontiers, and modesty of Camilla had a to withhold.

This explanation entire of the purity and gener views in assisting her; as mained to determine how; cealed from her brother's ledge till the morning; seemed at least within the bility that something might the united interference of the way to a union of all parties according to their wishes.

The friends thus saw a gleam of hope once more enlivening their sad prospects, and their sanguine tempers were leading them to magnify it into a brightening blaze of sunshine,— especially when they recollected that there was a private door opening from one house to the other, by the aid of which Portia might be conveyed from her brother's power, for the night at least, and thus afford time for the interference of Antonio and Carlos.

The absence of Antonio in search of Henriquez rendered it necessary not to wait even for the assistance of Flora, in putting this new plan in practice; for even if they had been disposed to trust the whole circumstances to Antonio, and look to his aid for the removal and concealment of Portia, it was too late to think of this now, as it was more than probable he would be accompanied, on his return, by Henriquez himself.

CHAPTER X.

Thus matters stood, then, and Camilla was on the point of accompanying Portia to the private apartment of the former in the adjoining house, when Antonio returned alone, and necessarily changed the whole course of their prospects and projects.

At first the friends scarcely knew whether to consider this return as fortunate or not; since at any rate it seemed to force upon them the very questionable step (as it still appeared to Portia) of disclosing to Antonio the whole circumstances of the case. They were destined, however, to be too speedily relieved from this momentary uncertainty.



up her mind to tell him t himself entered the ap standing his promise to 1 Corregidor, that he would the latter till intelligence him of the result of th impatience grew so great the extraordinary assertio he had seen and conversed own apartments, at the a every body believed she been carried off,-that at longer control his desire d and endeavouring to uni there. Accordingly, he ar just related? and

moment; and Antonio immediately turned to Henriquez and addressed him, saying that he had sought him anxiously, and was most happy at his return, as he had immediate need of his advice and assistance, in favour of some valued friends whom untoward accidents had placed in a most perilous situation.

"All is lost, then!" thought Portia and Camilla, as Antonio proceeded, yet they did not dare to stop him; and he continued—

"Here is a lady with your sister, Don Henriquez—"

"Yes—I see, and know her," interrupted Henriquez.

"Ah!" exclaimed Antonio, with an expression of pleased surprise; "then you
will, I trust, the more readily excuse my
boldness."

"In what?" said Henriquez, his astonishment increasing at every word ne heard.

"In being the occasion," replied Antonie,

"of your finding her here, with your fair sister, at this unseasonable hour of the night."

"The surprise that I feel," said Henriquez, at finding these ladies here, is indeed greater than I can express. But I trust, Don Antonio, that my sister Portia—that her late absence—"

Here Henriquez hesitated; for he was utterly at a loss what even to think, much less to say, under the unaccountable circumstances in which be found himself placed; while Autonio, on the other hand, thinking, from the



and which I will immediately explain to you, may excuse——"

"Excuse! my dear Don Antonio," said Henriquez; "why what is there in my sister Portia and her cousin passing the night together, that snould call for this ceremonious asking? On the contrary," continued he, looking sternly at both the ladies, "it is most fit some one should remain with my sister, after what has passed."

"Are they so near akin?" thought Antonio to himself; "then it is most lucky I procecded no further with my explanations."

"Had you not better retire to your chamber, ladies?" said Henriquez, sternly, after a few moments' pause; and they were glad to adopt his hint without further delay, so anxious were they to be once more alone together, that they might endeavour, if possible, to disentangle the web of perplexities which seemed every moment thickening around them, and also determine whether or

am the nature of 1112 AIG.

Thus, too, were Anto again left alone together, to receive, and fearful explanations which the weach had made so necessa

In the midst of this st and perplexity, Antonio collect that he had app receive his friend Octavio and this must be about there might be expected perceived that the rela appeared existed, between and the family of Henriqu more than ever importan a state of complete doubt and uncertainty, as to the strange and mysterious manner and conduct of Henriquez, during every interview that he had with him in the course of th evening. Antonio, therefore, informed Henriquez that he had left some arrangements unfinished, which required his particular and immediate attention; and then he abruptly left him.

Don Henriquez, on his part, was not sorry for an occasion that freed him from the immediate necessity of referring, in any way, to the events of the evening, in the presence of Antonio; to say nothing of the utter perplexity in which he still found himself, as to the true nature and results of those events. He was therefore glad of Antonio's abrupt departure, however unaccountable the motive for it; and he presently set himself to ponder, somewhat more soberly than his fiery temper usually permitted him to do, on the present posture of affairs; which, though he felt that

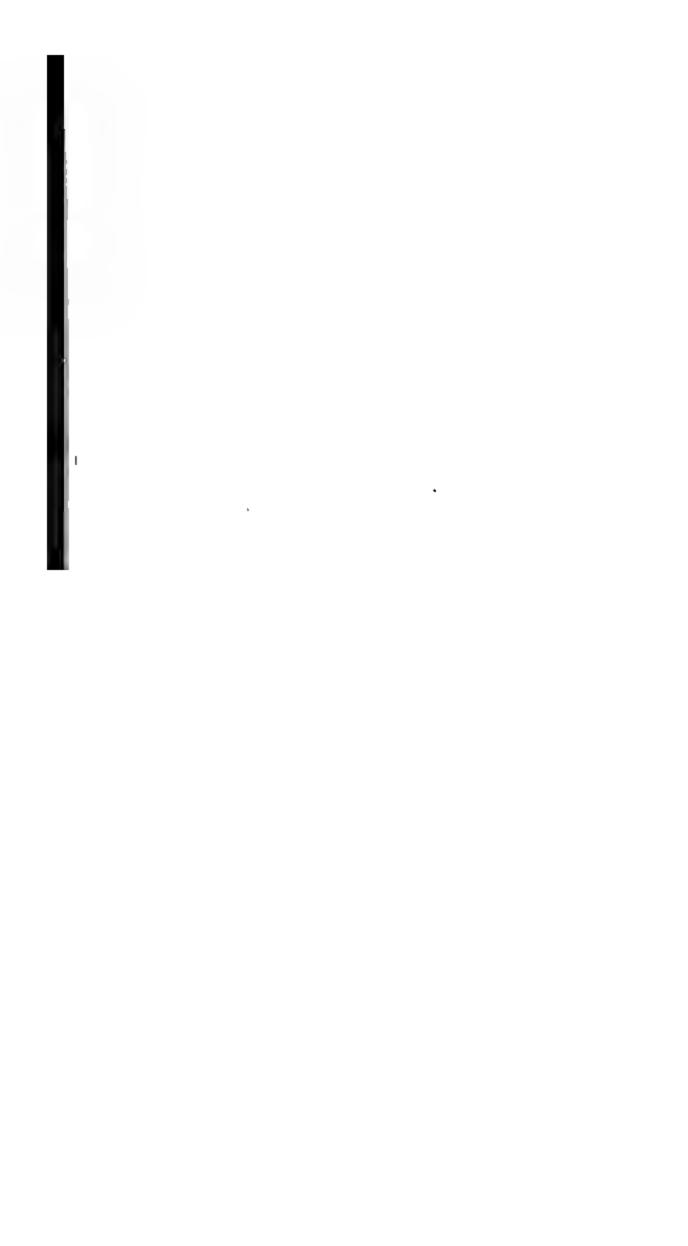
it would require the skill of an Œdipus to unravel them, he was fain to confess, did not wear quite so desperate an aspect as they had hitherto done since the ill-timed arrival of Antonio.

Leaving Henriquez to his own meditations for a few moments, we must once more return to the party which we lately left in so very doubtful a predicament, at the corner of the street where Octavio's house was situated.

It will be recollected how inopportunely their intended progress to the private apartments of Don Antonio, in the house of Don



On the arrival of the party at the back door of the apartment to which Carlos had directed them to be carried, Carlos himself,—having seen them all safely housed, by sending Flora and Diego in first, and then placing the chair in the door-way, so as to preclude the possibility of its occupant quitting it in any direction but that which opened immediately within the apartment,—ordered Don Henriquez' servant to close the door outside, and dismiss the chairmen. He then instantly repaired to the house of the Corregidor, thinking to find Henriquez there, and inform him of the success of his enterprise.



CHAPTER XI.

The party who had just been admitted into the house of Don Carlos, found themselves, on the servant's closing the door upon them, in utter darkness. The first thought of Octavio, during the interval of the servant's absence to fetch the lights, was, whether or not any means of escape offered themselves; for, however he might reckon upon the generous character of Don Carlos, he knew that the latter was too much identified with the views of Henriquez, to permit the entire escape of his most hated enemy; and anything short of escape must almost inevitably bring himself and Henriques together, and produce

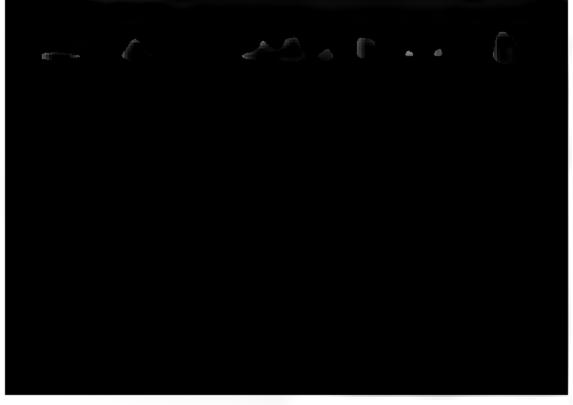
a personal contact, which could scarcely be expected to end otherwise than fatally. He therefore consulted with Flora, as to the possibility of escaping; and she assured him, that unless they were under the influence of the ill-fortune which had latterly pursued them so perseveringly, there were two possible ways of escape; one by the door which they had just entered; and another by a back staircase which led down into the garden, and from whence they might again reach the door at which they had escaped the fury of Don Henriquez in the early part of the evening. She confessed, however, that it was more than probable Don Henriquez' servant had locked the first of these doors outside; and that it was by no means certain they should be able, especially in the dark, to find the key of the door opening from the garden.

At the mere hint of its being possible to escape by the door at which they had just been compelled to enter, Octavio lost no time

in groping about in the dark till he found the lock. But while he was in the act of endeavouring in vain to turn the key, the door suddenly opened, and Henriquez' servant entered with a candle in his hand. But he had scarcely set his foot over the threshold, when he started, with a look of the most bewildered astonishment, at the sight of Octavio; and, on hastily receding backward a step or two, as if to assure himself that his eyes did not deceive him, his foot slipped, and in the confusion of trying to recover himself, he dropped the candle on the floor, and it went But he still contrived to slam to the door again, and double lock it outsideleaving the party inside in a worse predicament than they were before; for there could be no doubt that the man was gone to inform his master that his supposed rival and enemy, Octavio, was at last completely in his power. Octavio's situation, however, was a little bettered by the quickness of Flora, who had

snatched up the candle which had fallen on the ground, and by that slight-of-mouth which chambermaids so well understand, blew it into a flame again.

It was now evident that not a moment was to be lost in attempting a flight. As for the door by which they had just entered, all hope of escaping by that was abandoned; for they had too well heard it double-locked, on the man's last hasty exit. They therefore sought for, and found, the key of the garden gate; and while Diego was left at the top of the stairs, to watch and give the alarm in case of



trive to descend and escape, leaving Florabehind. This, therefore, he determined to attempt; and was hastily ascending the stairs to regain the inner apartment, when Diego came running down in the utmost trepidation, declaring that he saw lights and persons approaching through the little gallery from which the stairs descended, and in which there was no visible place of exit or entrance.

Octavio's hopes of a favourable termination to the adventures of the night had been slight enough; but this new disappointment affected him as strongly as if he had been on the point of succeeding in all his wishes; and as he once more ascended the stairs, he seemed to feel that it was utterly fruitless any longer to struggle against the ill-fortune which so obviously beset him, and that he might as well at once give himself up to the fate that awaited him. He, therefore, drew his sword, with a sort of dogged desperation, and re-

milla both stood before

The first impulse of a sight of each other, was But this very soon of doubt, and presently fear and amazement, wh the train of circumstan brought them together, on in the world, where it see: for them to be found:—Oc house of his implacable er friend, and where the ari might be every moment ex after having once escap power of her enraged and again inveigled into it, (under the pretence of being friendship, and on whom another had irrevocably placed the affections of her heart!

A sickness of the soul came over Portia and Octavio as they reflected on these matters, and on the end to which it seemed inevitable that they must shortly lead. But Camilla, though she was perplexed by the most anxious doubts and fears, as to the situation of Portia and Octavio, could by no means be persuaded to believe that it had arisen from the treachery of Antonio. That there was something in his late conduct which she could not fathom, she was willing to confess. By what strange mistake or want of judgment he had been induced to bring Portia back to the house of her brother, she could not divine; and it appeared from the report of Octavio, that but for the arrival and interference of Don Carlos and the Corregidor, it was his intention to have conducted Octavio himself to the same spot, under the profession of affording him a safe asylum. But then it was evident to Camilla that Antonio's whole conduct, since his arrival, had been actuated by some strange misconception; the commencement of which, and, perhaps, indeed, the sole cause, might be traced to what they had first considered the so lucky mistake of his servant Ernesto, as to the identity of his future mistress, at his first interview with the two cousins.

CHATSWORTH.

CHAPTER XII.

LEAVING the lovers for a few mements to their no less fruitless than perplexing fears and reflections, we must now relate that Don Carlos, not finding his friend Henriquez at the house of the Corregidor, followed him back again to his own, and there encountered him just as he was on the point of putting an end to his doubts as to the alleged disappearance of Portia, and her mysterious reappearance at the very moment he had thought her lost for ever, by summoning Portia herself to his presence, and forcing from her a detailed confession of the events of the evening.

This project was interrupted by the en-

trance of Don Carlos, who immediately began to relate the result of the last hour's proceedings, and concluded by saying, that he had that moment come from seeing Portia safely lodged in his own house adjoining.

Here Henriquez interrupted him by exclaiming, with a malignant exultation on his countenance,

"Octavio, you mean! Octavio! Now, then, he cannot escape my vengeance."

"No,"said Carlos, "not Octavio, but Portia. It was in Octavio's house indeed—I grieve to say it—that she was found; but he



"With the Lady Portia?" exclaimed Carlos, in the utmost surprise.

'With my sister Portia and the Lady Camilla," replied Henriquez, coolly; "and Don Antonio de Mendoza was present. In short, my dear Carlos," continued he, resuming his friendly tone, "my fears on her head are greatly hushed, if not entirely dissipated, by what has taken place during your absence. We have both of us been labouring under some unaccountable mistake, as to her supposed flight. She cannot have been absent from the house at all; for my brother-in-law Antonio declares that he saw and conversed with her, in her own apartment, at the very moment when we supposed that she so infamously fled with her paramour; and moreover, he seems in all respects satisfied with the intended union. So that I may now turn my whole thoughts to the prosecution of our just revenge against the hated villain Octavio, whom I still hope, notwithstanding your illtimed jesting with me, you have seen secured and carried to the place appointed by our friend the Corregidor. Is it not so?"

"Your words are riddles to me," said Carlos; "and all I can say in reply to them is, that, not ten minutes ago, I saw your sixter safely lodged in my own house, accompanied by her waiting-woman Flora, and also by Diego, the valet of Octavio, whom we found attending her. They were quitting the house of Octavio at the very instant that I and the Corregidor came in sight of it; and on arresting them and learning that it was represented.

back door of my own residence. I then left your servant Pedro to secure the door, and immediately hastened to the Corregidor's house, to inform you of our success; but not finding you there——"

At this instant the door of the apartment in which they were conversing was suddenly thrown open, and Pedro rushed in, out of breath, and in ludicrous perplexity——

"What is this interruption?" exclaimed Henriquez angrily; "what has happened?"

"Oh, Sir!" cried Pedro; "Don Octavio, Sir! your great enemy Don Octavio; we've got him, Sir!"

"Got him!" repeated Henriquez and Carlos at the same moment.

"Where? how?" continued Henriquez, eagerly.

"Next door, Sir," replied Pedro; "in the house of Don Carlos. His honour left me to secure the door upon the Lady Portia, and her attendant Madam Flora, and Diego, Don

the lepton to time to these for they were selfen the dues. This on returning it a few suments with the camble, and agencing the dust, who chould I are right believe me, the amount I expected, but Don General I drays the camble at my houry to came the court again and occurs here. To say authors of the fright I was in; for your honour knows that Dus-General is not the person for a serving-man to encounter singly; and then came to inform you of his presence, Sur."

Though this new and extraordinary incident did not in any degree satisfactorily explain the late cross purposes between Henriquez and Carlos, it immediately absorbed their whole attention, especially as each of them was fully convinced that he was right, as to the present situation and safety of Portia.

The immediate effect of this news, on the naturally violent and revengeful temper of Henriquez, was to renew his lately smothered rage against his supposed rival and mortal enemy Octavio, and cause him to determine on taking his vengeance into his own hands, by instantly seeking the object of his hatred, and sacrificing him at once, and at all risks; making the immediate plea of his violence, the illegal outrage which Octavio had just committed, in attacking his person, and attempting to carry off his sister; for although Henriquez was at the present moment fully convinced that this latter part of his project had failed, he was equally satisfied, from circumstances which had transpired in the course of the evening, that it was Octavio's chief object in entering the garden.

Carlos, on the other hand, was not pleased to hear of this unexpected capture of Octavio; for though he was anxious to do everything in reason to second and assist his friend and kinsman, he was by no means disposed to go the length of sacrificing to his ungoverned passion a person of Octavio's rank, bearing,

and unblemished character. But as he felt that to reason with Henriquez, in his present state of mind, would but aggravate instead of allaying his fury, he determined to let him take his course for the present, but to accompany him wherever he went, and closely watch over his actions, with a view to prevent, if possible, the affair coming to extremities with Octavio.

Matters were at this point, and Henriques was in the act of uttering aloud the most vehement exclamations, touching the supposed conduct of Octavio, and his fixed determination instantly to seize and sacrifice him to his offended honour, when Antonio entered the apartment, and having heard the denunciations of Henriquez, without catching the name of their object, insisted on being admitted to a participation in the danger which must attend so desperate a revenge as that indicated by them.

"As I must now," said he, "consider my-

Henriquez, he must allow me to look upon his injuries as mine, and to use my sword against his enemies, as promptly and freely as if they were my own: for I will not permit myself to suppose that Don Henriquez de Ronda can feel any resentments but such as are pointed out by justice and honour."

This unlucky arrival of Antonio threw Henriquez, for a moment, into a new perplexity. To explain to Antonio the precise grounds of his resentment in the present instance, was not to be thought of; and to attempt turning him aside from his purpose by hints of its danger, or intimations of any thing secret in the nature of his enterprise, were methods equally to be avoided;—the first seeming to infer a doubt of Antonio's sincerity, at least, if not his courage; and the second being likely to engender awkward and ill-timed suspicions.

These were the thoughts that passed across

the mind of Henriquez, as he considered for a moment on the result of Antonio's accompanying him and Carlos, and being implicated in the affair in which they were so deeply engaged. But they had little or no practical effect on his determination. His unbridled temper had so completely got loose from all restraint, at the prospect of an immediate and complete revenge upon his hated enemy, that he cared for little else; and as there was not a moment to be lost in prosecuting his purpose, he gave a hasty assent to Antonio's accompanying them, and they



them on their extraordinary and unexpected meeting, addressed themselves to consider the best course of proceeding, under the perplexing circumstances in which they were placed.

But they were spared much difficulty on this part of the matter, by the sudden exclamation of all present, at seeing a blaze of light flash upon the window, and the report of Flora as to the cause of this new interruption.

It was, in fact, Don Henriquez, attended by Antonio, Carlos, and a throng of servants with lights; and it was evident that their destination was that apartment; and moreover, that their purpose was deadly, since both Henriquez and Antonio had their swords drawn.

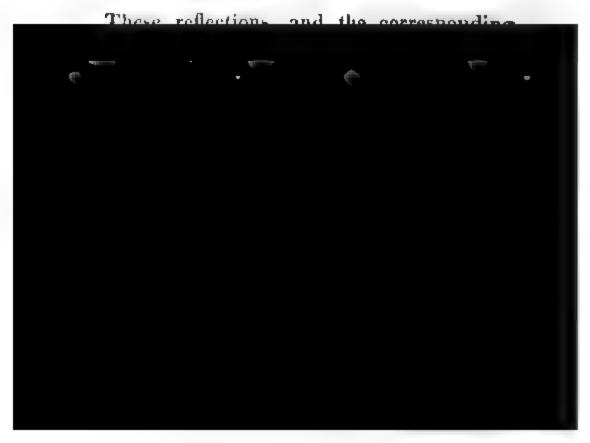
This latter circumstance threw even Camilla herself into a state of momentary doubt, as to the motives and purposes of Antonio; and it fully satisfied all the other parties of his base treachery.

As the door leading from the garden to the staircase of the suite of apartments was fastened on the outside, and as there was no means of effectually securing the doors of the separate rooms, it was evident that escape was now hopeless, and a general resistance vain-Octavio, therefore, whose presence of mind seemed to grow in proportion as the circumstances in which he was placed grew desperate, at once put on on a calm and stedfast demeanour, and in a firm though gentle manner, urged the necessity of all parties implicitly following his directions, as to the mode of meeting the meditated attack. And as, by this time, all but himself were too much possessed by their terrors to be able to think collectedly on what was best to be done, he had no difficulty in engaging them to comply with his desires, especially when he urged his safety as the chief end of them.

CHAPTER XIIL

In pursuance of his resolution, as thus formed, Octavio conducted Portia and Camilla, attended by Flora, to a small room within that which adjoined the one in which they were now situated, and conjured them not to leave it till a signal from him, whatever they might hear. And in order to quiet their fears as to his immediate personal safety, he professed a full confidence in the honour of Don Carlos at least. He then returned to the outer room, and quietly awaited the coming of Don Henriquez and his party,—fully assured, notwithstanding his pretended confidence to the contrary, that nothing but a

fatal termination awaited the meeting, so far as regarded himself: for he was not only fully acquainted with the desperate violence of Henriquez when his passions were roused, and the little influence which the prudence or generosity of Carlos might be expected to exercise over him, but he had lost all reliance on either the faith or the honour of Antonio: added to which, he was fully determined that nothing should induce him to do more than defend himself, against the brother of Portia.



It is scarcely necessary to relate, therefore, that the first communication between the opposite parties consisted in expressions of utter astonishment from Antonio, at his friend Octavio being the person against whom he had sworn to support and assist Henriquez. These, however, did not prevent Octavio from immediately accusing Antonio of the foulest treachery, and bidding him defend himself from the just vengeance of a deceived and injured friend; and he was proceeding to attack him, when Antonio cried—

"Hold, Octavio! hold, I conjure you! and do not let an error, however it may have arisen, prove fatal to a friendship like ours! Is it possible," continued he, turning to Henriquez, who had by this time entered, "that this is the person against whom your vengeance is directed?"

"And is it possible," reiterated Henriquez, with increasing rage, "that Don Antonio commences his proffered aid against my most

hated foe, by pausing and parleying with him? Strike, sir," continued he, "or step aside, and leave the affair to me."

And he was pressing by Antonio, and preparing to attack Octavio himself, when the former stood between them and exclaimed—

"Nay, then—my first promise was to defend Octavio in the perils that this night assailed him, from whatever source they might proceed; and my long friendship engages me to fulfil this promise, no less than my honour. He who attacks him, therefore, must do it



riquez, whose fury was raised to its height by this extraordinary change in the views and conduct of Antonio, would hear of no compromise or explanation, and permit no considerations of prudence to weigh with or restrain him. He therefore exclaimed with vehemence—

"Nay, then, Don Antonio, 'tis fit you know that the insulting outrage which this Octavio has to-night committed, on my house and person, is but the smallest part of his offence against us, and was but in aid of a still viler outrage, upon my sister Portia's honour, and which he had surely accomplished, by forcibly carrying her off, but for the timely arrival of Don Carlos and myself."

"How!" exclaimed Antonio, thunderstruck, and turning fiercely upon Octavio, but still with an incredulous and inquiring look.

"The foul imputation is false," replied Octavio, calmly. "True," continued he "I

have long loved and served the gentle

"How!" exclaimed Autonio again, with a look of increased severity and surprise.

"And would have rescued her, by her own consent, from the tyrannous power of her unjust and cruel brother. And need I add that I will maintain that love with my life, since the Lady Portia herself permits me to glory in its return."

"In its return!" repeated Antonio, and he seemed for a few moments buried in a profound consideration of the course which it now became him to adopt, under the opposing claims which seemed to beset both his love and his honour. At length his doubts seemed to pass away, and putting on an air of dignified calmness, he turned to Henriquez and said,

"The claims of honour, Don Henriquez, are peremptory, and must not be overlooked or trifled with. In the commencement of this

eventful evening I engaged to defend Don Octavio from the perils which then surrounded him, without knowing what or whence those perils were. And I must keep my promise, at whatever risk or cost. Let Octavio retire, then, and—"

Here Henriquez could contain his rage no longer. "Never!" cried he, "he shall not escape my vengeance, cost what it may."

And he instantly called in all his servants, who had been left without, and commenced a violent attack on both Antonio and Octavio; all the remonstrances of Carlos being unavailing to restrain him.

As all the party now fell at once, sword in hand, upon Antonio and Octavio, and as the object of these latter was defence merely, they, for the first few moments, kept within the doorway of the inner apartment; but then, by a sudden effort of Antonio, Octavio and himself were forced completely within the apartment, and Antonio instantly closed the

door and locked it, leaving their assailants outside.

Thus baffled for a moment in his long-sought revenge, Henriquez ordered some of his people instantly to fetch implements for forcing open the door; while Antonio, as soon as he perceived that they were for a time secure from interruption, turned calmly to Octavio, and addressed him thus:—

"Having now, Don Octavio, redeemed the claims upon my honour, by defending you from the violence of others, it remains for me

pretend to the heart and person of the Lady Portia, Don Henriquez' sister. possess her heart; and might have possessed her person, and have, ere this, made her my wife, but for the cruel treachery—(such I must call it-) of yourself, in again placing her in the hands of her brother. But a truce to recrimination. I claim the Lady Portia as my bride, and will maintain my claim against the world; nay, more, against the man whom I have all my life, until now, considered as (after herself) more than all the world to me. And though," continued he, "I have lately learned the claim (such as it is) which you, Antonio, have acquired through the will of her tyrannous brother, I must and will set it at nought; since it is superseded, not only by my own prior claim, but by the settled will and wishes of the lady herself, who has alone a right to decide between us."

"Every word you utter," replied Antonio, "is a new mystery to me. This alone is

clear, that one or other of us must resign his claim. And that I should do so, is what Octavio knows me too well to expect, when I tell him that the lady herself has this very night confessed to me that I, and I alone, have long possessed her virgin affections."

"Why, this is adding insult to treachery," exclaimed Octavio. "No more words, but defend yourself."

And they instantly commenced an attack on each other. But the first two or three passes had scarcely been made and met,



And he was on the point of joining in the attack on Octavio; but Antonio immediately turned, and standing on the defensive, against Henriquez, exclaimed,

"Nay, Don Henriquez—this quarrel must be mine alone, since it is against my honour and happiness that the pretensions of Don Octavio are chiefly directed. Let him resign his claims to the Lady Portia, and retire."

"Never!" exclaimed Octavio vehemently. Then he added, with an air of desperate resolution—" Cease your senseless contentions with one another, and turn all your fury upon me; for with life alone will I resign my claims—conceded to me by her gracious self—upon the heart and person of the Lady Portia."

The obstinate resolution of Octavio, and a demonstration which he now made, of attacking both Antonio and Henriquez, and forcing his way through them, turned both their swords upon him, together with those of the

the earnest remonstrances of Don Carlos were of no avail in staying the imminent peril in which Octavio now stood;—when suddenly, a cry from the inner apartment was heard, and the next moment Flora rushed in, followed by Portia and Camilla, who flung themselves before Octavio, and put a stop to all further violence, by the utter astonishment and consternation into which their appearance threw all parties.

Henriquez was the first to break silence.

"Nay, sir," said he; "though I have not the honour of knowing this lady, I have sworn to aid and protect her through the perils of this night; and I must keep my word."

"Not know her!" exclaimed Henriquez, turning to Carlos; "not know my sister Portia? What means this mockery? or are we all under some strange delusion?"

"Madam," said Antonio, turning to Camilla, and scarcely seeming to notice the vehement, but to him unintelligible, exclamations of Henriquez; "how can I enough apologise for having been the cause of leading you into these distracting scenes, so unfit for eyes like yours to witness? Let me entreat you to retire, and—"

"It is I," said Camilla, interrupting him, "it is I, Don Octavio, who must seek excuses, for not having sooner cleared up an accidental error, which has, I greatly fear, in part led

to those seemen; through it was encouraged with the view of turning them aside. Know, then, that I am not the sister of Don Henriques. de Ronds, por is my name Portin. My name in Camilla de Peñau; and this gentleman, Dan Carlos de Peñas, is my brother, who is scarcely less indebted to you than myself, for the signal nervice you rendered to us in Flanders. How we can hope to repay our deep obligations, I know not. But let me at least exonerate you from the vows which you have this night made to me, mistaking me for another; and let me add (though, I trust, your generous nature will scarcely need this declaration from me), that I should not, for an instant, have listened to those yows-grateful as I have confessed they were to my beart-had I not known that she to whom they were due by your contract was devoted to another; and had I not, moreover, believed that the happiness of my dear friend and kinswoman would

have been utterly destroyed—nay, her very life endangered—by a premature disclosure of the mistake into which you had fallen."

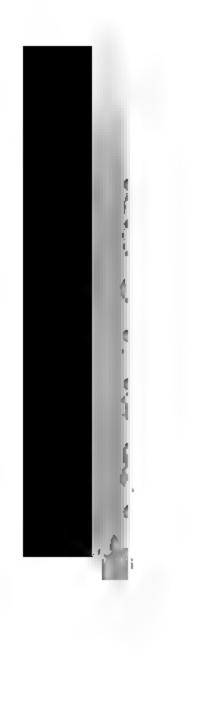
When Camilla ceased to speak, Antonio gazed rapturonsly upon her for a few moments, and then turned towards Octavio, and the friends threw themselves into each other's arms, without uttering a word. Octavio then put aside his sword, and advancing towards Henriquez, who remained silent and confounded by what he had just heard, addressed him as follows:—

"Events, Don Henriquez, which were beyond the controul of either of us, have made it no longer either possible or necessary for me to persevere in that concealment of my love for your sister, which nothing but your unfounded jealousy, and consequent hatred of me, could ever have induced me to adopt. That I never, for an instant, stood in the way of your love for the Lady Camilla, she herself will confirm to you, if, indeed, you have

that lady's avowal of her affection for my friend Autonio. Your cause of resentment against me being thus groundless, the effect will, I hope, cease, and with it your augry feelings touching the unfortunate death of your friend Don Gaspar. Let me now, then, no longer scruple to solicit your consent to a union, which the fates themselves seem to have this night favoured, and on which depends the happiness of two persons who would willingly look upon you with the feelings of respect and affection due to a friend

CHATSWORTH.

numerous explanations which took place, on the past events of the night, and the anticipations which thronged upon the parties principally concerned in the Double Marriage which it was agreed should speedily ensue.



BEFORE proceeding to read the Romance which formed the Fifth of the Chatsworth Nights' Entertainments, the writer of it desired to explain, that its object was to shew the precise method and materials employed by those writers of the olden time who have excited as much admiration (whether deserved or not) among the most approved judges of our own time, as they did among all classes of their contemporaries. "To this end," said he, "I have taken a tale in verse, from that singular old treasure-house of Romantic Fiction, "Heywood's Hierarchy of Angels," and have simply translated its antique verse into, if not antique, anything but modern, prose; altering the language as little as possible consistently with an entire absence of rhythmical cadence, and altering the characters, sentiments, and incidents, not at all. So that, to accuse my story of extravagance and improbability, or a



102

CHATSWORTH.

want of adaptation to the critical requirements, and the literary habits and tastes, of our own day, will simply be to complain of its fulfilling the very object for which it has been produced."

THE THREE WANDERERS;

OR

THE ORACLES OF DELPHOS.



CHAPTER 1.

THERE was a man of Epirus, named Thestor, who had three children, all of them so dear to him, that it could scarcely be said which of the three he loved best.

The eldest was a sweet and hopeful boy, who had been bred with no common care, on account of the great estate that would descend to him, and the nobleness of his birth. The other two were daughters. The elder of these was fair and well accomplished, and was greatly beloved by all who knew her; but the younger was so rare in loveliness, as not to be paralleled in the land. Her age was three lustres, not a day of which had

passed over her, without alking some ornament to her still growing heavy: till at length, no me could look upon her wethout a wondering admiration, which seemed to say, that is her, Nature had surpassed herself; so choice and perfect were all the ingrodients of her beauty.

Being so young, and thus wavering, as it were, between childhood and wantshood, this virgin's mind had not yet suffered itself to dwell on any distinct anticipations of the future. But still, bearing herself commended as she every day did, she could not belp being sensible of her surpassing beauty. And this caused her to take great delight in being seen abroad. Moreover, the sense of her own loveliness being ever present with her, she used perpetually to haunt the sea shore, and watch the waves from which her favourite goddess, Venus, was said to have emerged. Every morning it was her custom to rise at cock-crow, and, wandering by herself even to

the very verge of the waters, listen to their murmurs, and gaze upon the foam from which, as she learned from the poets of her country, the Deity whom she adored was born.

As this maiden was wandering thus, one morning early, some pirates, who had observed her custom of coming to the sea shore alone, contrived to hide their vessel behind a projecting point of rock; and having climbed over, and descended behind her, they suddenly rushed forward, seized her, and carried her off to their vessel.

These pirates had no sooner secured their prize, than they hoisted sail, and made away to the very farthest part of Greece—so far from the habitation of the young maiden, that it seemed like another world to her.

There we must leave her for a while.

Thestor, having missed his child, now first began to perceive that she in particular had been his darling, and the solace of his age. At first a strange indefinite fear of some fatal disaster possessed him; and he sent messengers over all the isle, in search of his child. But they returned without any tidings of her.

Then, because of her matchless beauty, a thousand fears began to assail him, lest her yet unripe years had permitted some enamoured youth to spirit her away.

Then he thought that she must have fallen a prey to some wild beast; and he caused every cave and unfrequented wood to be explored, to see if any vestige of her torn limbs or garments could be found. But still in vain.

At last, when every hill, valley, rock, river, and grove, even to the most obscure and remote corners of the island, had been searched, it suddenly came into his thoughts that she must have been stolen away by pirates; for he knew that the seas were infested by them, and that his child—How, thought he, could I

ever have let her do so!—would frequently wander out on the shore alone.

From the first moment of this thought coming into Thestor's mind, of his darling daughter having been carried off by pirates, he was fully satisfied of its truth; and for a while this wretched father gave himself up to a kind of wilful despair. He would hear of no aid or comfort from his other children; and it seemed as if, in losing his loveliest and latest born, he had lost them all.

For many days and weeks the bereaved parent remained in this state. At last, he suddenly bethought him, that he would no longer stay at home and vainly mourn over the loss of his beloved child, but would take ship, and sail away into far lands in search of her.

He had no sooner said this to himself, than he was impatient to put his thought into act. Nor could his other children by any means dissuade him from his wild purpose, or induce him to let them accompany him in his search. Himself alone he will commit to his fate.

Accordingly, Thestor left his whole substance in the hands of his remaining children, and at once departed: having first made a solemn vow that he would never again set his foot upon those shores, till be had found his youngest daughter, living or dead.

He first directed his course to Delphos, with the intent that, in order the better to speed in his purpose, he might consult the oracle of Apollo, and beg instruction as to his future destiny. Arrived thither, his offering made, and all ceremonies duly performed that the customs of the Temple required, he received from the Delphian priest the following reply:—

"Wretched father, stay thy grief,
And give thy careful thoughts relief:
One daughter thou hast lost, but know
That in her stead thou shalt find two."

This mysterious answer much perplexed

him; and after long pondering within himself, he could draw no favourable omen from it. He knew that he had lost but one daughter, and that but one he wished to find. He therefore held the reply of the oracle to be a vain one, framed, perhaps, only to mock his grief. And in that thought he put to see again.

Meantime, the elder sister, seeing her dear father, and her sweet younger sister, both gone, and the house thus left desolate (excepting the presence of her brother, whom nothing could persuade from perpetual sighs and sorrow for the loss they had sustained), deliberated secretly with herself, and at last determined that she would follow the lost ones, and at least escape from the tedious and wearing grief which grew upon her. Accordingly, after careful preparation, she hired a bark, and, having disguised herself, put to sea. But she first made a vow, similar to that of

desirous to know
fear, as to the end o
fore caused all the
performed, and rec
to her demands:—

"Maiden, if the Lay aside thy 'And profess the Get thee bow a In rich curls th And in trim ck Apollo-like—w

Thus encouraged she followed the dire things, and again pro-

CHAPTER II.

We left the younger sister in the hands of pirates. After passing many dangerous seas, and crossing sundry channels, they came at last to a safe harbour, at which the pirates purposed to stay till they had made sale of their prize; which, on account of her rare beauty, and of the great sum which they expected to obtain for her, they had preserved from all stain, and had treated with the utmost care and kindness.

Arrived in the city, they brought her, veiled, to the open market place, where many merchants were assembled for the purchase of slaves. In those days there was nothing so vol. III.



people were gath her when the vei be removed.

This being don seemed to grow which, coming thu affected the gazers ness of the sun i comes upon men cloud, than when clear sky. Her ey the place, and to the in the beholders, we speechless wonder.

Some of them su

mortal mould. But there were a few, of better judgment, and more staid in their conclusions, who, perceiving the changes which fear and modesty worked in that young creature's countenance—making the rose and lily contend there for the mastery—determined that, though the wonder of her sex, she was merely human. They observed, too, that her mind was perplexed with grief; and they knew that passions, and the troubled looks which attend them, have no affinity with the Divine nature. Moreover, whatever her wondrous beauty might seem to bespeak her, they saw that she could scarcely be other than a mere mortal; since, after she had thus stood to be gazed upon for a brief space, one of the pirates, after a loud "O yes!" proclaimed, with a clamorous voice and a bold countenance, that she was a captive, and to he sold.

On this, some of the merchants drew nearer to the beautiful slave, and a few of them inquired the price which was demanded for her. But the covetous pirates who had stolen her, set such a value upon her, as would have shaken a common man's estate.

Yet there were some present who would willingly have paid the price named, merely to have possessed the rare beauties of this maiden, could they have felt that they might do so with security. But a whisper ran among them, that she was only fitting for some crowned monarch, and that any ordinary mortal, being possessed of such a gem, could not hope to retain it: "For" (thus they

general confirmation which its rareness received on all hands, (not to mention the additions to the relation,) that he almost felt as if he loved her before he saw her; and he had already formed a purpose to possess her.

The next day the King sent for the pirates and their captive; and when they came, and he looked upon the strange maiden, a new fire seemed to grow within his breast, and the love that beauty had hitherto excited in him seemed to change, as he gazed on hers, into a kind of adoration: for all the beauties of his own country seemed to sink into nothing in his estimation; since he found, in her, no want of any one grace which he had hitherto looked for separately in them.

After gazing at her silently for some time, the King at length asked the price at which the pirates rated her. They named ten thousand drachmas; which the King instantly paid, and dismissed them, well satisfied with the bargain they had made.

As for the King, he was no less delighted than if he had gained a second empire; and when he thought of the great price which he had paid for the maiden, he almost wished it had been greater, since he hoped that the more she cost him, the more she might prove compliant to his wishes.

She was now conducted to a princely chamber, hung with richly-wrought arras, and there she was scated in a chair of state, and many ladies appointed to attend upon her wishes.

The King then sent his chief conuch to her, bearing queen-like attire, and also a union was placed, so rich that no queen had ever worn a richer. Also jewels to encircle her neck, and some to glow upon her breast.

Being now completely attired in all these regal ornaments, which seemed to breed a wonder in those who beheld them, in her no change could be observed. There she sat, waiting with a mild patience for what was to succeed; when presently, in came the King himself, through a private entrance, and stood before her.

He was a youthful Prince, apparelled like the spring when he would court bright May. His age was somewhat more than four lustres, and you would not among men look upon a goodlier presence.

Immediately upon his entrance the attendants withdrew; and the maiden, perceiving, by this, who it was that stood before her, rose from the seat, and made so low an obersance to him, it almost seemed as if she would have thrown herself at his feet.



she did—while a as if to crave hi: there was no oth seen in her counter

The Prince was
dered) to find that
had even added,
beauty which was a
and if he loved i
forced, whether I
upon it.

He now bethoug of her; for he had she was his slave, her as some divin took her hand, and grasped her soft and white fingers between his. Then he stooped down towards her face, and imprinted a kiss—and then a second—upon her cheek, which she did not turn away; accepting his courtesy with such a sweet grace, that it was difficult to tell whether it was with or against her will that she received it.

The Prince was now impelled to make a further suit to her. But as he sought to move it in words, his tongue grew mute. Yet the rhetoric of passion spoke so eloquently in his eyes, that, unskilled as the maiden was in such language, she could read what he would ask; and fear began to assail her. But she spoke not.

At length the Prince, urged on the one hand by her wondrous beauty, and on the other by his own fierce passion, put his guilty wishes into words; at which, such a blush struck into the face of the maiden, that it was hard to tell whether it proceeded from

thame or anger. Still she spoke not, but fixed her eyes dejectedly on the ground; and the Prince again arged her reply to his passionate motion. Upon which, so far distant were her thoughts from all sin, that though she knew the bondage in which the King held her, that hereditary virtue which was bred within her instantly supplied her with courage, and she addressed him in these words:—

"From that sad fate, great Sir, which made me your captive, the greatest princes themselves have not been free. It is not many days since I could have laughed at Fortune, which has now divided me so far from my beloved friends and country. Yet I should have felt that she had, in some sort, made amends to me, in placing me in the power of a Prince of so royal a nature as yourself must be, if your mind suits in virtue and nobility to the unmatched promise of your features, the like of which I have not seen in any other earthly creature. But oh! if such a

beautiful outside does but inclose baseness beneath it, I must then tell you that these rich presents which you have lavished on me I throw back to you with scorn. They are not mine. Take them again, then, and do not add to the loss which you have already suffered, in ransoming me from the robbers who stole me from my distant home."

Saying this, a sudden anguish seemed to seize upon her, and she plucked from her hair, and neck, and forehead, the jewels which the King had sent to her, and with a look of firm yet modest anger, laid them at his feet. Then she continued—

"There is one jewel that I still possess, Sir—my honour—which all the wealth of your treasury shall not purchase from me. I will keep it unblemished, spite of all disasters." (Here she began to weep.) "Put me to the test, and you shall find that though you may overcome and kill my body, my mind is beyond your reach. But oh!" she added after a

moment's pause, and in a different tone, "why should I suffer these vain terrors! As I look upon your sweet and noble aspect, such a cheer grows within me, I feel that Chastity itself need not start, nor Innocence fear, in your presence."

As she uttered this reply to his solicitations, the King's eye was kept constantly fixed and gazing upon her face; and his ear listening to her soft and musical tongue, which seemed as if it could utter nothing but truth and goodness. And when she ceased to speak, he looked upon her delightedly for a few mo-

CHAPTER III.

Him no tempests could affright, and no misfortunes deter, from fulfilling his purpose, of wandering about the world, and crossing all seas, in search of his lost daughter.

Long he strayed away at random through every land, thinking that his course could not be wrong if it led him from his home; till at length, after a tedious peregrination of many months, (during which he visited many nations so remote that he had not before known of their existence,) he arrived in sight of the island where his dear child—late a captive and a slave—had reached to a regal estate.

Poor, doating father! Had he but known

this, he would have flung himself into the sea, with a desperate haste, thinking the winds too slack, and the tide too slow, to bear him to the presence of his dear delight!

But mark! when fate purposes to cross us, our joys turn to sorrow, and our gains to loss, and the nearer we approach to the object of our wishes, the more cause we have to fear for the result!

As the vessel neared the shore, the wind arose, and brought a mighty tempest with it; and the bark was beat upon the shelves; and the poor sailors and their master were forward believed that those whom they now saw in such danger were doomed to it by divine justice, as a punishment for the spoil and rapine under which their island had so often suffered. So, as the inhabitants saw them swim ashore, one by one, wearied and faint, and scarce able to help themselves, they laid hands on them, and bore them away to prison.

The father, because of his grave aspect and superior habit, they took for the captain of the band. Him, therefore, they treated with double harshness; putting heavy gyves and fetters upon him, and manacles on his hands, and bearing him away to a wretched dungeon, into which they threw him at once, without hearing a word he would have said to them. And there, for a while, we must leave him, till his robes turn to rags, and his head and face are hideously overgrown with hair; and go in search of his elder daughter.

We left her in the Island of Delphos, clad as a priest of Apollo, and looking like Endymion upon the Hill of Latmos, when the never-tired Moon was gazing at him; or like Amintas in green Arcadia, the day after he first beheld his Phillis; or like Adonis when Venus met him fitted for the chace, and forced her sweet embraces on him. Or, had she been decked with wings to match her shafts and bow, she might (save in her stature) have stood for the love-god, Cupid.

The maiden's mind, too—thanks to the promised inspiration of the god whose order she had followed—was fresh and fitting to her shape. And she once more set sail with a

And still she had found no father—no sister.

At last she landed on the very isle where her father lay in bonds, in a wretched dungeon, while her sister reigned a crowned Queen.

It so happened, that not many days before the arrival of the elder sister at this island, the King had been called away, to mediate between two great Princes, his friends; and in this forced absence of her husband, the Queen reigned alone.

During this interim, news was brought to court, that a strange ship had entered the harbour, and that one passenger therein was of a most choice aspect, and of a bearing that seemed worthy to be entertained by a peculiar welcome. To the Queen (whose curiosity was raised by this report) he was described as a beardless youth, beautiful as Jove's cupbearer, when the God snatched him from Mount Ida. And on a still more strict inquiry, it was found that he was a priest of

Apollo, and therefore that his person had a kind of Divinity belonging to it, to wrong which by any shew of neglect was deemed a deep sacrilege.

The Queen immediately sent a lord of the court to invite the young stranger to her palace. He came, and each affected the other at first sight; for though the disguise of her sister completely hid the relationship from the Queen's sight, yet there is a secret working of nature within us, that will not be gainsaid, and in obedience to which kin will recognise kin, whensoever it meets.

with—the jewels that were woven in her hair—her numerous train—the distance that she kept, thereby commanding the more observance—her port and gesture: in short, seeking a captive, he could little think that he had found her in a Queen. Instead, so wondrous does her state and beauty seem, that he almost mistakes her for some goddess.

Thus, though they look long and often at each other, yet neither could apprehend a sister in the shape under which each appeared. But yet they felt a mutual sympathy, which presently endeared them to one another.

When they had thus conversed some time together, the Queen ordered a banquet, at which she feasted the seeming priest with most sumptuous cheer, even as if Apollo himself had been his guest.

The banquet ended, they again discoursed, though of nothing tending to their own affairs. At length, the Queen having bestowed all choice of entertainment upon her guest, he

proposes to depart to his vessel. But she would not hear of his faring so hardly as he must do there; and tells him that his lodging is prepared in the palace, and that while he makes abode in that island he is as welcome to her as a god.

Thus courteously compelled, the seeming priest accepts the Queen's welcome, and retires for the night to a rich chamber, whither he is ushered by many attendants.

When the Queen was left alore, there immediately came to her a conceit, which, the more she pondered on it, the more it waxed

Apollo had left her, "My beauty is of such rare note, that all who look upon me, grow from wondering into loving. Even my royal husband, the sovereign of this great land, sways all his subjects, only to be himself ruled by me. In telling of my features, praise turns presently into admiration. And I am no sooner seen of the people, but the cry is, She is descended from some deity. But what," continued she proudly—"what is all this, if only those feel the power of my beauty, who are under no vow to guard themselves against Now here is one—a votarist—Apollo's priest—bound by a sacred oath to abjure the rites of Venus. What if such virtue were in my face, that it could tempt even himthat it could pierce his chaste breast? Then indeed might I claim the palm of beauty, by strict right. But till I have assayed such trial, I may still fear some rival."

She now resolved to put this stranger's

the sent for him into her presence, and having dismissed her attendants, (as she might do without suspicion—he being a vowed priest of Apollo's temple,) she began to practice upon him those love-lures which women know. First she courted him with her eyes. Then she called up blushes to her checks; as if she would say something, yet feared. Then she began to woo his fair hand with her own still fairer, sighing as she looked passionately upon him.

But all was in vain. He did not seem to understand her, and all the while remained utterly mute.

At last, seeing herself no whit nearer to her end than when she began, she broke silence framing a cunning apology for the feigned passion which she would expound to him.

"There is no sex nor age," said she, "no state nor degree, but is subject to the will of the fates that rule over us. What they

decree—whether just or not—we cannot shoose but do. Our wills are theirs, and we merely do that to which they enforce us. No mortal can evade their laws. That all this is so," continued she, "I am myself this day an example. I apprehend the right, and would pursue it; but I feel enforced from it, against my better nature."

And then she blushed again, and turned her beautiful face aside, as if she would fain conceal the passion which seemed (against her will) to possess her.

Still the seeming priest remained mute; and she proceeded thus:

"I, that am now a wife, did once resolve to spend my days a Vestal virgin. And I would fain have been so to this hour; but that the fates would have it other. Then, when I became a Queen and bride, I would have kept my wedding vow unbroken; and I might, but that the same fates have decreed it otherwise, and have sent you hither (from I know not

136

what strange land) to make me break my nuptial oath. And to make all things sort, they have sent my Lord hence to a far clime, leaving the time and place convenient to their will. Would'st thou know what it is the fates bid us do? Look in my face, and read it there."

Seeing him still unmoved, she continued—
"I have thus laid my love-sick thoughts before you. And know, that she who sues is one who must not be gainsaid. I now leave you for a while, to think ou what I have said. When I return, I must be answered."

CHAPTER IV.

And now, what a throng of thoughts came into the mind of the seeming priest, and perplexed her with their contradictions! What should she say or do? she seemed ensnared in a Dædalian maze, from which Theseus himself could not have extricated her. Being a woman, who so well could search and dive into a woman's heart? who so well could apprehend the strange malice that bad women will essay, when crost in their bad loves? And of a Queen, what could she guess but that her desire for revenge would swell, in proportion to her greatness? Who, in brief, but a woman can

fotiem the secret depths of a weman's possions?

But we must forget the sex of our securing priest for the present.

He knows, then, that he is a stranger in this land, and alone, and that there is none to aid or support him against the (seement) wicked designs of this Queen; and that his life is therefore doubly engaged. If he eppose her guilty sait, her incressed passion may prove implacable. And if he even seem to yield to it, his secret must be disclosed. Say that he confess himself a woman? Will she not suppose him some strange impostor, who has profamed Apollo's sacred office? what seemed most of all against this disclosure was, that it might prevent the end of his travel, and the vowed purpose of his life—the finding of a sister and father. This thought determined him in his course, that, come what might, he would simply give to the Queen' suit a flat denial.

Meantime, the Queen returns, having first changed her late gorgeous attire, for one which showed more of the woman, and less of the Queen. Her bright hair was more enticingly displayed. Her habit was more fitted for dalliance than for state; yet it was no less rich than that which she had put off: more seeming careless, yet greater care mingled with its neglect. Words cannot duly express the art she had used, in making the seeming artlessness of her attire suit to the sweet beauty of her aspect.

And here, let no one dare asperse the spotless virtue of this lady—let no one rashly apprehend that lawless passion, and hateful spouse-breach, were her objects, in thus tampering with her charms: for surely, she was every way as chaste as she was fair. No, it was but that innate feminine vanity and pride, which are evermore joined to surpassingbeauty. Wherever there exists a supposed supremacy, there no rivalry can be brooked,

•

priest had in the least kind bowed him to her feigned motion of love, and so broken his vow, she would instantly have dismissed him from her presence. But while the power of her charms seem cast away upon him, she is still fain to try them further. She, therefore, put on still more passionate looks and gestures, unitable to the loose vesture she had assumed; as if she would have inflamed the icy-veined Hippolitus himself.

The youth, meantime, leans sadly upon his elbow, while she looks in his face with an amorous smile. Still in vain. At last she plucks him by the sleeve, and bids him be of cheer; entreating him withal to yield her a reply to the motion with which she lately left him.

Then, as if roused from a trance, the youth rises from his seat, and casts a scornful look upon the Queen, striving to put a frown upon that brow which was too smooth to bear one. Then he said,

"Is it possible that one so young can be so wicked? that so sweet a tongue can utter such harsh discords? Can it be, that so foul a mind finds dwelling in so rare a feature? Or is it that such as have power to match their will, must needs stretch both to do evil? We compare the great ones of the earth to gods. And such they are while they retain their goodness. But if once they swerve from virtue, then are they lower in the sight of the gods than common men. For my part, lady," he continued, "be your thoughts as evil as they may, nay, be they even worse than you yourself expressed them, (which scarce can be,) and though you had even more power than you have to enforce them, I am still steadfast in my will, still constant to my vow, and will remain so."

Saying this, he turned aside.

And here let us once more seek to excuse this Queen, for still further pushing her strange purpose, of trying to the uttermost above all, guard her from the suspicion of unchaste thoughts. Briefly, then, she was but a woman, and one hitherto rejoicing in a beauty which none had sought to rival or resist. Moreover, she was a Queen; raised, as it were, in an hour, to that high estate, by the force of her beauty alone. Shall we wonder, then, that one, at once a woman and a Queen, finding her will baffled, and her beauty put to scorning, should feel angry and unjust passions stir within her, and yield her for a while to their wrong guidance?

pose, ere the first step towards its accomplishment. But feeling no movement within her that could alarm her love for the King her husband, she could not choose but let her will have way, without looking whither it was leading her.

So when the youthful priest turned aside from her blandishments, she half-felt, half-feigned, an angry passion; and after a brief pause, she determined to essay whether the fear of death could shake that firmness over which her beauty was powerless. Calling aloud to her attendants without, as they entered, she addressed them thus; heedless, (woman-like,) of how she was to extricate herself from the strange dilemna in which her words must presently place her.

"How is this?" said she. "Am I not your Queen, and was I not, but now, most near to extreme danger, through your negligent attendance—you, who have means and dependance from us? Here is this stranger, whom I

had almost taken to my bosom by reason of his strict order, to whom I have given all respect and reverence; nay, had his God, Apollo himself, been present, (as 'tis said he once came down from heaven, either to court some maiden on whom he doated, or, when the proud race of Titans chased him and his fellow-gods to earth, was herdsman to Admetus till that great broil was over,) had even he, I say, the great Apollo, been cast upon this shore, as this young priest has been, nay, had I looked upon him in his best fulgence, I could not have put greater favour on him than I have done on this his priest. And yet (let me proclaim him to the world unworthy the high title he adulterates!) he would have committed such a deed (I know not whether to smile or frown while I utter it), that had his own God, the Sun, beheld the baseness of his priest, he would have shrunk back and hid bimself for shame! You may perchance guess my meaning. It was a crime so heinous that it needs no further words to tell it; or, if it does, my modesty cannot endure to speak them. Only imagine that, which, if accomplished, had dishonoured me, and planted disgrace even on your King himself!"

This said, she threw herself on a seat, and put on such angry looks, that none could guess but all was true which she had uttered. And they came about her, asking what she would have them do to avenge the insult she had suffered. Upon which, she suddenly sprang from her seat, like one incensed, and bad them bring to her quickly a sharp-edged sword.

It was no sooner asked than brought; for engines of evil are ever at hand. When, turning to those about her, she said,

"Such of you as have most love and duty for the King and me, take that, and sheathe it in the breast of this impostor, whose simple looks cover a world of mischief. Hasty and bold was his attempted crime; sharp and sudden then be its revenge!"

At this they all started and drew back; for though they knew that her strict imposition (however severe) was a just punishment for the attempted crime, and that, being just, it were best to be speedily performed, yet all feared to have a hand in doing it—so sacred were those held who had taken upon themselves the service of a god.

At this she seemed more incensed than ever, and said,

"Must I then implore, where I should command? And is my subjects' pride or their neglect such that their Queen must be denied her just wishes? Or hath your King taken all our true-breasted with him, and left none to avenge our mutual wrongs?"

After a few moments' pause she continued.

"I now remember me that, many months agone, a band of desperate sea-robbers were cast upon these shores, bloody and debased

men, who, for freedom or for gold, would act anything. Go some, bring hither the captain of that band, knock off his gyves, and say that I propose freedom and reward to him."

A messenger was instantly dispatched to obey the Queen's orders, while all the rest stood in deep amazement, as loath to dip their hands in sacred blood.



CHATSWORTH.

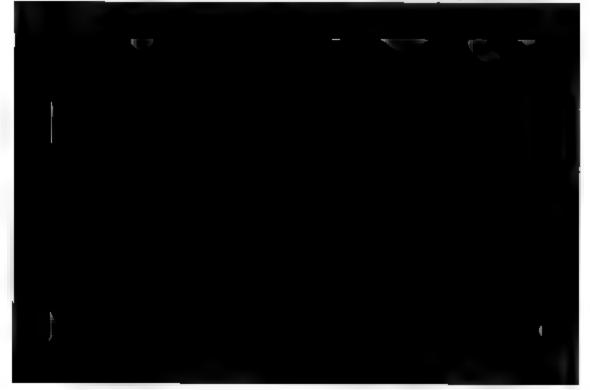
CHAPTER V.

HERE let us have leave to make a brief digression, which is needful, to avoid that confusion which might else maim the conclusion of our tale. This Queen no sooner became a partner in the throne, but fearing how her dear father might bewail her desperate loss, and wishing, too, that he and her dear sister and brother should share her happy fortunes; she had caused letters to be despatched to them, signifying how all things had befallen, and inviting them to leave their native soil, and cross the seas to give her a wished meeting; since she declared that all joys, pleasures, delights, and honours, seemed

but as toys and idle dreams to her; nay, that even the diadem itself was no better, if not worn in their sight.

But this happy news came too late; for (as we know) immediately on her loss, the father had sped to Delphos, and the sister had shortly after followed him, and both were absent when the letters arrived.

But the brother was still at home; and when the glad tidings reached him, he instantly prepared for the voyage; for till he saw his dear sister in her high estate, each day appeared an age to him, and every hour



brows, cheeks, and chin, thickly overgrown with hair; and his clothes so ragged and tattered that none could guess him for the man he was. The Queen, too, was so changed in all things, that no wonder neither of them knew the other; neither of them looking for such a meeting, after such a separation.

The Queen, having looked upon him, takes him for the desperate man that he is given out, and thus addresses him, before the whole assembled court:—

"Thou of the seas—a rover and a robber—chief of those pirates who were lately wrecked upon our shores, by the just doom of Heaven, and, as a judgment for their many outrages, now doomed to lasting durance; if I should his day propose to thee a certain means by which thou and thy guilty train may gain their freedom, wilt thou embrace it?"

The old man, who had not till then seen the sun for many months, cast a wavering look upon the Queen, and seemed for a while lost in admiration of her rare beauty. At last he thus addressed her:—

"Whether angel or goddess, I know not, and my reverent fear forbids me to inquire. But one or other you must needs be; since that countenance could not have breeding from a mortal stock. And then your tongue utters such melody, that I must think you are she, the Ocean-born; else that wise Maid, bred of the brain of Jove; else Juno, she that lights the torch of Hymen, the Queen of Marriage, and the mistress of all chaste



bondage hinders me from pursuing that quest which is the only end of my sad life!"

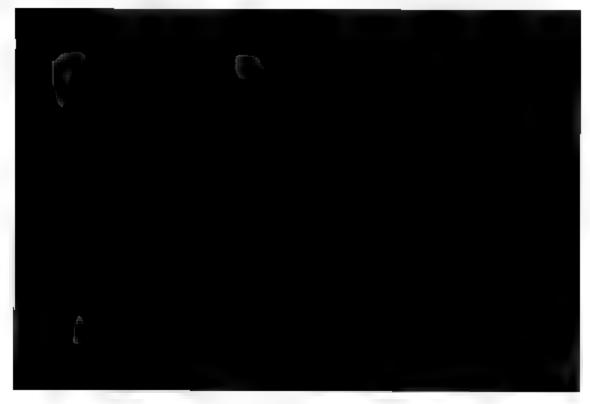
This said, he was silent; and the Queen replied to him.

"None of these things I will propose to you. The task I enjoin you shall be easy, and free from danger. You see that unarmed youth;—take this sword and kill him. This is all I ask of you; which done, you and your fellows shall have instant freedom."

He took the sword, and having proved, upon his hand, its point and edge, he looked upon the Queen for a moment, and then turned towards the priest of Apollo, whom he had not till then seen, and who was standing by, awaiting his death, with such a calm and sweet aspect, that all who looked upon him were moved to pity.

The old man's feelings became doubly distracted at the sight of such antipathy growing between those two bright creatures; the one so sweet to look on, yet so cruel; the other so young and valiant; and what seemed to strike him most with wonder was the strong resemblance between them.

But these feelings soon gave way before those which grew out of his own condition; for he now perceived how basely he was discusteemed, and how impossible it would be to recover his freedom without acting this bloody sin which was proposed to him. And how could be, who had all his life feared nothing so much as to do evil, turn his innocent hands to kill? Thus all his sad



die branded as a pirate and a thief; so, after a brief pause, he once more addressed the Queen thus:—

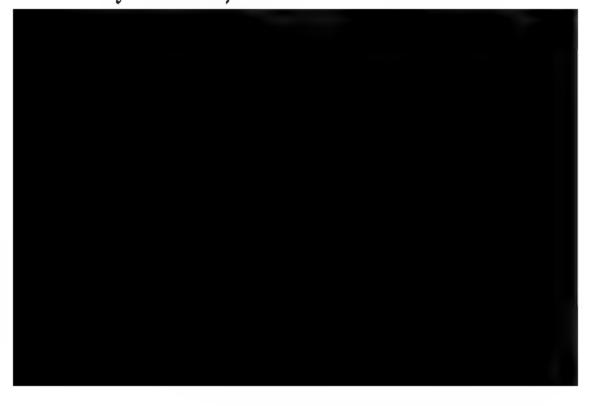
. "Madam, I know not whence may arise your ground of anger against this youth, whose looks bear such a charm with them, that, for a world, I would not do him ill. But as it seems that your will is I must one way or other run into evil, let me at least declare, before yourself and all your train,: that I am not that you take me for; that I am no base ruffian, to stain my hands with blood; no pirate, nor no robber; but a wretched father, shipwrecked on your coast whilst seeking a lost child, whom might I once more have seen, death had seemed but a new life to me. But that is now past hope. Bear witness then, all of you, that here I. came in search of my lost daughter; that Epirus is my country, Thestor my name; and: that now I die, a wretched father, martyr to. the ill-fortune that pursues me."

So saying, he was in the act of falling on the point of the sword which he held in his hand; but the youth rushed forward from where he stood, and seizing the weapon, forced it from the old man's hand, and exclaimed.—

"No, father; it is not you should die, but this bad Queen!"

And he was rushing towards her, as if to make his words good.

She, meantime, at first speechless with amaze at the words she had just heard, suddenly exclaimed,—



making her sex apparent, and disclosing her, so that each of the three at once knew the others.

And now, how shall the poet's barren brain and pen be able to tell the inexpressible joy that possessed them all? for ecstasies like theirs, which spring up in the heart by sudden changes and chances, surcharge every part of the soul's faculties, and make wonder, in a most strange fashion, grow into rapture.

At first, pleasing doubts seemed to arise between them, till they could scarce believe what they both saw and knew. All were assured that what they beheld was true; yet each feared it might be false. And, at last, as they stood gazing upon each other, the sole effect bred by the strange bliss of each and all, showed itself in a passion of sweet tears.

Then, suddenly, each grew full of words, yet none could break the silence that seemed to enthrall them.

At this moment a rumour spread itself through the assembly, that a young noble, a stranger from Epirus, having heard the fame of the Queen's great beauty, had just arrived to visit her. At the name of Epirus all three started; and the Queen herself, thinking, perhaps, of the news she had sent to her home, gave instant orders for his admission to the court.

Then, what eager expectations grew among the happy three, at the thoughts of seeing one from their own country, who might give them tidings of their kin. The Queen, indeed, his own) all recognise and run towards him, the sisters crying "Brother!" and the father "Son!"

He, meantime, as they all three cling about him, is lost for a while in a doubtful amazement; so changed are they all since last he saw them. Who can they be?—(he thinks)—the old man overgrown with hair like a savage beast, and dropping with loathsome rags and tatters; the queen blazing in rich bravery, that the better showed off her rare beauty; and the third, a doubtful shape,—the hair and aspect of a woman, with the attire of a man?

But as they repeated their embraces, and he looked on their countenances, one by one, more steadily, partly by that, and partly by the well-known sound of their tongues, his timorous doubts gradually grew less, and presently he knew them all for that they were.

Then, how he greeted each and all; but

first reverently he cast himself at his dear father's feet, and craved his blessing—no sooner asked than given.

The Queen now commands a rich habit to be brought her father, becoming his new state; and while the attendants are clothing him, the brother and sisters (no longer strange to each other) freely interchange those feelings which spring up in their unfeigning hearts.

Meantime, to complete this happy scene, the King himself is at hand, accompanied by the two Princes, between whom his mediating chance so fills him with wonder, that it seems that island shall remain in debt to all posterity, as the scene of so unhoped a meeting. The story shall be told, he thinks, while summer shall succeed to spring, and winter to autumn; while Time shall keep a feather on his wing; and it shall be believed and wondered at, till Lachesis herself hath not another thread to spin.

And now, being loth to cloy the patient reader with expressing the general jubilee that followed this great meeting; and moreover, being fonder to blunt our knife in feasts and banquets than tire our pen with telling of them, we will here make an end of our story; only relating further, that the King, in honour of the fulfilled oracles of Apollo, raised a great temple to that god; that Thestor, the grateful father, consecrated an altar to Neptune, thinking so to please and pay the power that had helped him to find his lost child; and the beautiful Queen herself, transferring

her worship from her late favourite Venus to that Fortune who had so turned all her seeming troubles into joys, reared to her honour a stately temple, in which yearly she paid the tribute of her happy vows. The contributor of the Sixth Night's Entertainment begged to shelter himself under the panoply of Shakspeare's name, from the critical shafts which, in an age of utilitarianism, must necessarily be directed against a story chosen, not merely in spite of its strange and wild improbabilities, but because of these—that is to say, because of the novel occasions they seemed to afford for the development of human passion and character. "For the rest," said he, "so far as the principal incidents are concerned—

"It hath been sung at festivals,
On ember-eves, and holy ales;
And lords and ladies of their lives,
Have read it for restoratives."





THE

WANDERINGS OF PRINCE PERICLES.



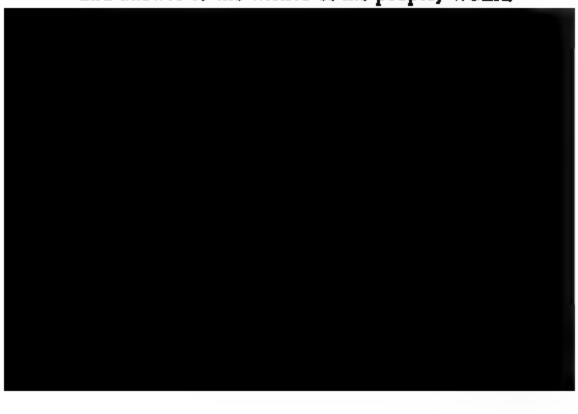
CHAPTER I.

In Ancient Tyre there once reigned a Prince named Pericles, who, though he was called to the throne at a very early period of life, soon won the admiring love of his people, by the wisdom and virtue which appeared in all his decrees and actions.

One thing alone was wanting, to complete the prospect of lasting happiness which opened before both King and People, on the succession of Prince Pericles to the throne of his ancestors. He was the last of his house; and there was no female in the kingdom of

birth and breeding fitted to share the throne with him, and give to himself and his people a promise that the noble race which had so long served and swayed over them, would not become extinct.

The thought of this, and also a sense of loneliness which perpetually haunted the affectionate heart of Pericles in the midst of his high estate, induced him at last to determine on travelling to foreign lands, in search of a Princess whose qualities and condition, while they might add a lustre to his throne, and answer to the wishes of his people, would



of the late King of Antioch, and niece to the present King; and in seeking whose hand several of the most brave and hopeful young Princes of Greece and other countries had already sacrificed their lives; for Antiochus, her uncle, a cruel-hearted and fantastical tyrant, had caused it to be publicly proclaimed throughout Greece, that the sole price of his niece's hand was, the solving of a certain Riddle, which he was ready to propound to whoever desired to hear it, under the immutable condition, however, that he who claimed to hear it, must first consent, in case of failing to furnish the true solution within a certain space of time, to forfeit his life.

If this deterred many from declaring themselves suitors to the Princess, to others the romantic danger of the enterprise offered an excitement, which even the extraordinary beauty and seeming value of the prize annexed to its success might in itself have wanted; and of all who had hitherto triof and failed, the dreadful penalty had been exacted by Antiochus with the most remorseless strictness.

Whether or not Prince Pericles chose this as a new occasion of showing his entire devotion to the wishes and interests of his people, certain it is, that the first place to which he directed his course on quitting his kingdom, was the Court of the King of Antioch; intending to judge for himself as to the claims of the Princess, and if he found them such as they had been reported to him, resolved to risk his life in seeking to win her for his bride and Queen.

As Pericles was the most distinguished Prince who had yet presented himself at the Court of Antioch, on this romantic and perilous errand, he was entertained by the King with an unusual show of outward respect and honours; and was immediately introduced to his niece, who received him

with a cold and haughty reserve of manner, which, however, did not prevent her extraordinary beauty from making a very strong impression upon him.

But the banquet which was given by the King, on the occasion of Pericles' arrival at Antioch, was scarcely over, before the latter was satisfied within himself that the strange and terrible means which had been adopted by the King, to deter suitors from offering themselves to his niece, and to get rid of those, the strength of whose passion for her prevented them from being so deterred, was not the result of a mere capricious and fantastical cruelty. He observed at once that there was a secret and mysterious intelligence existing, and perpetually at work, between the King and his beautiful niece; and though he saw no clue which led him even to guess at its import, it excited within him a vague feeling of curiosity, not unmixed with something like fear, the sense

of which did but the more strongly impelhis ardent and active spirit to pursue to the end the adventure which he had undertaken.

CHAPTER II.

The close of the banquet was the time appointed for propounding to Pericles the Riddle on which his fate now depended; for he had Iready signified to the King his determination to hear it, and to abide by the risk attending a failure in expounding it. He observed, however, that as the moment for reading it to him approached, an evident change took place in the manner of the King towards him. The seeming frankness with which he had received and hitherto entertained Pericles, gradually gave way to an air of restless anxiety, which would not be wholly suppressed, and which once or twice shewed itself in what was meant



King to abst ment, provide suing it furthe In truth, A time, to entert: of the dreadfo self-love had te the very words conceal it: for verse and impio was wrapt up in had therefore] from absolutely have done; yet c cunning in his w fear the infamy t

Pericles he already recognised a Prince, if not greatly superior in birth, courage and warlike accomplishments, to those who had preceded him in this perilous enterprise, at least, infinitely above them all in those intellectual endowments which alone Antiochus had cause to dread; and the more he thought upon the words in which his fatal secret was couched, the more he became sensible of the dangerous folly into which his vain-glorious pride had led him, in leaving it so open to discovery.

But it was now too late to retract, on either side; and at the close of the banquet the Riddle was duly read to Pericles by the King himself, but in the presence of his beautiful niece alone. A written copy of it was then placed in the hands of Pericles, to be referred to in case of need; and the assembly separated till the next day at noon, at which hour the expounding of Pericles was to be given, at the peril of his life.

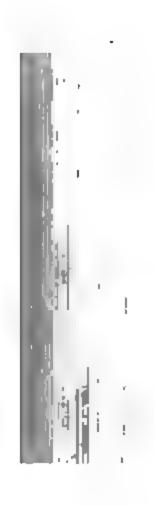
Which, tas

What is that
At once bot
What are tho
Who die by

What's She w
To snare a t
What's He wl
And slakes !

Who are those T Expound or die!

On hearing
Pericles were t
scene before h



CHATSWORTH.

they fell upon it as sounds merely, bearing an import fatal or favourable to his hopes, as he might thereafter be able to draw forth, or to miss, their hidden meaning. But when, on retiring to his chamber, and pondering a few moments beforehand on the fate that probably awaited him, he at length drew forth the paper, and read it silently for himself, the colour came and went upon his cheeks and lips, in answer to the tumultuous throbbings of his heart: for the terrible meaning of the Riddle flashed upon his mind as he read, and moreover, showed him that there was as much danger in expounding as in missing it.

What was to be done? Would he who was constantly lying in wait for the lives of those who dared but to approach the confines of his fatal secret, be more merciful to him who should discover and expose the foul guiltiness of it? And yet, not to discover it, was of a certainty to forfeit his life

VOL. III.

mined that the him but in se he contrived show the Kin close his gui hopes of thus deadiy purpose self or others in his chamber couched in the

Those guilty Two-Dare not to ques The deadliest crime Abstain! Your 4

CHAPTER III.

As Pericles journeyed homeward, he thought but little of the danger he had escaped, and still less of that which awaited him. His mind was altogether occupied by the contemplation of that fair but polluted temple, in which, at the first sight of it, he had hoped to build up his future bliss, but which, now, he could only regard as a rich sepulchre, beautiful to look upon, but filled with rottennes and death.

The thought of this engendered a feeling of bitter disappointment within him, which seemed to grow in strength as he approached towards his beloved city of Tyre; and ore he

ming the hit eyes and che Helicanus, his came to gree turn, he was at the quick of in the air a master.

Affectionatel
Pericles, he w
ilently this s
bearing of the
however kings
friends, and des
n return, they w
their words.

being thought unhappy, without an apparent and sufficing external cause for being so; for among those who deserve to be happy, none are much otherwise without such cause. And thus it was with Pericles; and Helicanus saw that it was thus. The wisdom and the virtue which had hitherto governed his thoughts and actions, contemned and disavowed the feelings from which his present melancholy sprang; for the fatal beauty of the Princess of Antioch, instead of being cast away from his thoughts, as a poisonous weed is cast from the hand when its qualities are discovered, was still cherished there, as we cherish a sweet-smelling flower, and hide it in our bosoms when its outward beauty is withered.

During the day following that on which Pericles returned to Tyre, Helicanus, finding that he still remained silent, and that the same troubled thoughts seemed to possess him, determined not any longer to permit the re-

to learn the camanner and a and Pericles, his new weakn what was durelated all thating the dread covered, touch niece.

This relational almost as mudone Pericles, manner. He made a most dake, in lettin

the long life of Helicanus had been, he had not passed it in courts and cities without learning that it is almost as unpardonable a crime in the sight of guilty great once to Anow the secrets of their guilt as to expose them. He knew, too, that so great was the power and influence of the tyrant of Antioch, even princes themselves might have fatal cause to dread the consequences of his displeasure. So that the most anxious fears for the safety of his royal pupil and friend took possession of Helicanus, on receiving the above intelligence; and after duly considering what it was best to do under the embarrassing circumstances in which Pericles was placed, he left no arguments untried to prove to him, that now more than ever it was necessary for the interests of his people that he should absent himself from his kingdom for some time.

Whatever Helicanus might think, as to the dangerous hold which the beauty of the Prin-

cest of Antioch had taken of Periclea' senses, the special reason which he gave for the necessity of this measure was, that without it Pericles' life would stand in daily peril, from the machinations of the tyrant of Antiock, whose jealous fears would not let him rest for a moment under the feeling that there was one living who, of a certainty, knew and could disclose the secret of his foul guiltiness.

At first Pericles could not be persuaded even to listen to this advice; for it was too true that the dazzling beauty of the Princess of Antioch was still misleading his mental vision; and while he thought that he was only contemplating it with feelings of pious horror at the mischief which its wondrous excellence had wrought upon its possessor, and on all who had hitherto dared to look upon it with eyes even of lawful love, his own senses were enchained by its bright enchantments.

But Pericles was of too noble a nature to suffer himself to be long dangerously enthralled by the mere outward types and shadows of excellence; and after a while he determined once more to quit his kingdom for a space, not so much from a fear that his life was in danger from the machinations of Antiochus, as from a prudent and modest distrust of his own power to overcome the mischievous illusion that still clung to him, without the aid of those external excitements which he hoped to find in a total change of scenes, motives, and feelings.

In brief, Pericles prepared for his immediate departure from Tyre; and as it was his fixed determination to remain absent for a considerable space of time, he deputed his sovereign authority into the hands of the wise and faithful Helicanus.



CHAPTER IV.

THERE was at this time raging at Tharsus a great famine, which had half depopulated the land, and which the short-sighted and ignoble policy of the neighbouring princes had permitted to take its fatal course; for they thought that thereby the kingdom would become so reduced from its ancient power and splendour, as to fall an easy prey before their ambitious views of conquest and renown. Thither Pericles directed his course, attended by several vessels, bearing corn from the well-stored granaries of Tyre; and there, after a quick and prosperous voyage, he arrived in safety.

The wretched Cleon, Governor of Tharson, and his wife Dionysa, were lamenting over their hopeless condition, and the desolate plight of their late proud and happy city, when a messenger from the neighbouring portentered hastily, and announced to them that many vessels were making towards the land.

happy Cleon. "Pamine has already done the work of war upon us, and they have only to seize and bear away their unresisting prey. Our arsenals are silent; our streets and market-places are grass-grown; our pleasant groves and gardens are broken up and polluted with half-covered graves. What can our enemies do for us worse than this? Our temples have exchanged hymns of grateful exultation for prayers broken by sighs; and their inceuse cannot ascend to the gods for the tears that wet it. Our theatres are empty and dead; foul creatures harbour in their stately galleries, and in their beautiful places

obscene birds build and congregate. Our houses are a blank without, and a desolation within: their famine-stricken inmates sit like statues, sullen and silent, gazing upon each other, and waiting their turn to die; or, in the madness of their sorrow, parents look upon their own children with horrid longings, and blaspheme the gods that gave them.—Let them come!" continued Cleon after a brief pause; "what can they bring us worse than that which is with us or awaits us? And if they could, what can we do to stay them?"

As he spake, and was about to retire with Dionysa from the chamber, faint cries were heard without, from the few people who had collected on the shore; and presently a lord of Pericles' court was ushered in, who claimed permission for the Prince's ships to enter the harbour. He explained the occasion of their coming, and the name and rank of their leader; and he added, that all his royal master asked in return for the timely help he

had brought with him was, an asylum for himself and his people for a brief space.

Cleen scarcely dared to hope that this tale might be true; and yet he scarcely cared to think that it was false. He gave a cold consent to the entrance of Pericles' ships into his harbour; and then retired to wait the event, with a sort of sad indifference as to what it might prove.

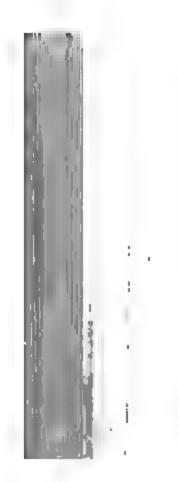
Before the day was over there was not a face in Tharsus, not even the palest, but was lighted up with a grave joy. All knew the beneficent intentions of Pericles; and all, even those for whom it came too late, partook by anticipation of his gracious bounty.

In a week Pericles saw the beautiful city waken around him, as if from death; her streets and houses once more alive with busy faces, her temples teeming with thankful worshippers, and his own footsteps followed, wherever he went, by grateful benedictions; and he more than ever found that the surest

spread it abroad upon others. The unwented weight of melancholy thoughts that he had brought with him to Thersus grew lighter and lighter every day; and before the end of a month, he began to feel and to confess that the hitherto fatal effects of his unhappy expedition to Antioch were fast wearing away.

But Pericles had yet to learn that one untoward hour may give birth to the bane of a whole life. As he was one day conversing with Cleon, news was brought him that a ship had just entered the port, bearing the flag of Tyre; and presently afterwards messengers entered, with letters from his faithful friend and counsellor, Helicanus, the purport of which proved that their joint fears touching the secret purposes of the King of Antioch were not without good foundation.

It appeared that an emissary from Antioch had reached Tyre shortly after the departure of Pericles; and his conduct on learning of



The letters unurged to pr his immediate they further conceal the p as it was cer would leave n passing the c prove a daily s ally as that lif some sort for pact entered in cause of his lat Again, there self to the seare further determi a few chosen friends, and sending back all his ships except the one which was to bear him on his way—as yet he knew not whither. But this time he set forth with far other hopes and feelings than those which had accompanied him on his way to Tharsus. His youthful spirits had well-nigh resumed their wonted activity; and though the affectionate reverence that he felt for Helicanus had determined him to yield to his counsels, he put aside all fears that pointed at his own personal safety, and thought only of the new scenes that awaited him in distant lands, and of the knowledge and wisdom that he might draw from them, with a view to the future government of his beloved Tyre.



CHAPTER V.

ALL things being prepared for his departure, Pericles took leave of Tharsus amid the grateful benedictions of her chief and the whole assembled people, and put to sea, with the intention of leaving the direction of his course to the will of the Gods. That will was but too soon manifested. On reaching the open sea, the vessel of Pericles had, in obedience to the impulse of the winds, steered westward from Tharsus during the whole day, it being the Prince's determination to put in at the first great city on the neighbouring coast. But, as night came on, the winds arose, the sky became overcast, and at length



<mark>ռու ացա</mark> vessel drove and when at high in the l tially disper looked upon effects of the of which all t bad disappea there lay a hu senseless, as waters. It w He alone of a the sinking sh rock and went The storm

the noonday s taide on whist bouring heights, to prepare their nets, and to get ready their little boat, which was moored in a creek near at hand. They immediately perceived the seeming corpse, and approached it; and as they did so, its suspended powers revived beneath the action of the warm sunshine, and it shewed signs of life.

Briefly, the strength of Pericles, exhausted by long swimming, speedily recovered itself by the friendly care of the fishermen, who conducted him to one of their cottages near at hand, and left him in the care of a female. There he learned that the shore on which he had been cast was that of Pentapolis, and that Cyrene, the capital city of the kingdom, was situated only a few leagues off.

Further, Pericles learned that great shows and feastings were about to take place in that city, on occasion of the birth-day of the beautiful Thaisa, daughter of the King, Simonides, and that, above all, there was to be a great tournament, the conqueror at which

would, it was expected, be allowed to claim the band of the princess, provided he could find favour in her sight as well as her royal father's; for it was said that the wise and good Simonides felt himself a king and a father, only in so far as the happiness of his people and his children were concerned, and that what he sought in a son-in-law was, not birth, power, and high estate, but those qualities that were likely to bring good to his subjects, and make his daughter happy.

More deeply than before did Pericles now regret the loss of his good ship and its contents, since it seemed to place farther out of reach than ever his chief object in quitting his kingdom; for utterly desolate and unknown as he now found himself, how could he think of presenting himself at the court of Simonides, or hope (even if he should feel so disposed) to find favour in the sight of the princess?

The day was spent in vain regrets for his

late misfortune, and the night in still vainer dreams of the near future, blended strangely and fantastically with the present and the past. But what he grieved for most of all, after the death of his faithful followers, was the loss of his favourite suit of armour, which had hitherto always accompanied him whereever he went, and for which he felt a sort of superstitious reverence; because it had been worn by the late king, his father, in all his battles, and had been consigned to the son at his death, as the most precious gift which its owner had to leave behind him. While possessed of this, Pericles did not seem to fear that any insurmountable ill could befal him; but now that it was lost, his spirits and his heart, for the first time, failed within him, and he began to think that the Gods themselves had forgotten to care for him.

But even now, while Pericles is giving full sway to his fears, and feeling as if all hope had left him, an event is at hand which will act like a happy omen upon his balf-sinking spirit, and give it new strength to fulfil the strange and varied destinies that await him. With the break of morning, the fisherman at whose hut Pericles had found shelter, returned from his dangerous quest; but without the usual fruits of his labour. He and his companions, he said, having met with little success while out at sea, had, on their return homewards, flung their nets much nearer to shore than was customary with them; and one of them, on its owner attempting to recover it, was found to be firmly attached to some object, which it could neither remove nor get free from; and that, on the others going to his assistance, they had, with the aid of their grappling-irons, succeeded in lifting from the sca into one of their boats a complete suit of rich but antique armour; which was the object found to be entangled in the meshes of the net. He added, that it could not have remained long in the sea, for its brightness was scarcely tarnished by the waters.

The heart of Pericles stirred and warmed and grew strong within him, as the fisherman related his little tale; and by the time it was concluded, you might have seen the light of hope taking the place of the late darkness in his deep eyes, the blood mantling to his cheek, a spirit of new joy gathering round his lips, and his whole form dilating and lifting itself where he sat.

"It is mine," he exclaimed proudly and aloud, as the fisherman concluded; "the armour is mine! Where is it?"

And he rose, and was about to leave the hut abruptly, without waiting for a reply to his question. But the next moment his grave mind gathered its new thoughts together; and he returned, and grew calm, and addressed the friendly fisherman, as one on whom the fulfilment of all his new-born hopes depended.



render me we a dead father. The ship in storm of two coast, and a perished by escaped, as I the chance th with mingled Gods, and w proving my a feasts and reve in the capital tournament, the bright reward

may still repay your kindness; for this omen that you announce to me speaks fair fortunes in the future. All that I need is a steed, a good sword, and a guide to direct my steps toward your fair city. Find the means of furnishing me these; and if the knight of Tyre does not return to thank and ——— Stay!" said he, seeming suddenly to recollect,-"I have here a jewelled ring, of price and beauty (and he drew it from his finger); it was once worth the wearing of a king. Take it, and provide me what I need. Bring me the best horse and the best sword that your city can furnish. It will purchase them both, and, perchance, leave wherewith to season my thanks for your fair service. Take it."

The fisherman and his wife listened with faces of blank surprise to the quick speech of Pericles; and when he had concluded, the man took the offered ring, and after gazing on its dazzling beauty for a moment, left the

hut to join his companions; while Pericles went with eager steps to where the armour had been deposited on the open shore.

Meanwhile the fishermen consulted together on the speech of Pericles; and as there
was that in his mien and manner which
gained instant belief for all he uttered, the
result was that his wishes were speedily complied with; and the evening of the same day
saw him enter the noble city of Cyrene, a
lone warrior, with no possessions but his
sword, his armour, and his steed; but richer
in these, and the high hopes that youth and
health once more called to life within him,
than (without these) the richest train of followers that his own Tyre was capable of
furnishing could have made him.

CHAPTER VI.

THE next day was that appointed for the great festival which was to honour the birth of the beautiful Thaisa, only daughter of the King Simonides. The morning which ushered in the day showed every corner of the bright city alive and busy with preparations for the tournament, and the banquet which was to follow it; while at intervals processions were issuing from the temples, and traversing in long interminable lines the streets and market-places; crowds were gathering together in the open spaces, speculating on the results of the day; sacrifices were every here and there sending up their thin smoke into the

clear blue air that overhung the marble fances
of the city; and every window and house-top
was alive with bright faces, looking forth
from time to time upon the passing scene
beneath.

It was in a great open space, aside from the city walls, that the lists for the tournament were set out; and from this spot at length the trumpets sounded, announcing that the preparations were completed, and that the king and his lovely daughter were about to approach.

As the venerable Simonides led his fair child by the hand, through the crowd that fell back on either side while they passed, and accended the steps of the throne that was raised for them, and at last scated her by his side, still holding her hand within his, it might clearly be seen that his mind was occupied with far other thoughts than those engendered by the outward shows which awaited their attention.

The princess herself, now for the first time openly presented to the assembled people, seemed to have merged all senses in that of sight alone; all impressions seemed to be absorbed in a sweet and eager curiosity, touching the new scenes that everywhere surrounded her. Still there was a tranquil and touching softness spread over and penetrating every look and motion, which the novel feelings and images that were stirring within her could in nowise disturb; and as she continued to gaze intently on the general scene, without marking any particular feature belonging to it, a slight shade of half-wondering sadness passed into her face, as if she were looking on a picture which foreshadowed her future fortunes.

When every preparatory arrangement had been made, each of the knights who were about to take part in the tournament, advanced separately to the foot of the throne upon which the Princess Thaisa was seated,

and presented to her his shield, whereon was engraven the motto indicating the tone of mind in which he had undertaken the contest. In some instances hope was expressed; in others the deep humility in which real lovers feel so much pride; others contained some high-wrought compliment; but all denoted a pleasurable condition of mind, originating in the sanguine confidence entertained by each knight in his own prowess.

The unknown knight was the last who presented himself; and his shield bore the device of a withered branch, that was green only at the top. This device was not accompanied by any motto; but nevertheless seemed to be understood by Simonides, who turned to Thaisa, and said:—

"A pretty moral—is it not? You see, by his dejected state, that he hopes, through you, his fortunes yet may flourish."

The lords attendant upon Simonides were moved to sarcastic smiles by the unusual

appearance of this last combatant; but their slighting observations were presently checked on perceiving the tone assumed by the King, who seemed to be more favourably inclined towards the unknown knight than to any other of the candidates.

Thaisa, on the other hand, whatever were the feelings wrought in her by the mien and bearing of the strange knight, maintained throughout the ensuing combat that grave reserve of aspect and demeanour which came over her the moment she first looked upon him.

The result of the tournament fulfilled the half-unconscious anticipations of Simonides, touching the unknown warrior, who successively vanquished every one of the knights, not only in the appointed trials of valour and skill, but in those minor feats of agility and sport by which the higher solemnities of the day were followed.

Finally, at the banquet which closed the ceremonies, and at which, as victor of the Vol. 111.

Thaisa, the accomplished conversation of Pericles so entirely won the favour of Simonides, that though he believed his guest to be no other than a simple knight of Tyre, who had been wrecked on the neighbouring coast while in search of knightly adventures, he at once determined to court his alliance with Thaisa, if the Princess herself was satisfied to receive him as her husband.

Accordingly Simonides invited Pericles to make a lengthened stay at the court of Pentapolis; and (briefly—for the adventures of helf

211

CHATSWORTH.

CHAPTER VII.

NBARLY a year had elapsed after the marriage of Prince Pericles with the Princess Thaisa—which period they passed in happy nuptial tranquillity at the court of the good Simonides—when messengers arrived at Tharsus, bringing to Pericles a communication from Helicanus, to the effect that he feared it would be impossible for him any longer to restrain the impatience of the people, under the mysterious absence of their Prince. The faithful Helicanus further stated that the people of Tyre had offered to transfer the crown to himself, and that he had only been able to restrain them from this demonstration

of their confidence in him, by engaging to accept the proffered trust, provided, at the expiration of another year, no tidings should have been heard of their absent Prince Finally, Helicanus communicated to his royal master the death of his powerful and bitter enemy, Antiochus; who, together with his beautiful paramour, had been struck by fire from Heaven whilst exulting in their guilty greatness; thus offering a signal mark of the just vengeance of the offended Gods.

On receiving these communications, Pericles immediately prepared for his departure from Tharsus; but he endeavoured to persuade Thaisa to remain behind, on account of the prospect of her soon becoming a mother. This proposition, however, she strenuously opposed, gently but resistlessly urging her irrepressible desire of accompanying her beloved lord, wheresoever his destiny might lead him.

According, Pericles and Thaisa took their

departure, in a ship which Simonides caused to be prepared for them, Thaisa being attended only by her nurse Lychorida; the grief of the good Simonides, and of his loving people, at the loss of their amiable Princess, being in some degree mitigated by learning what, until now, Pericles had concealed from all—namely, the real station to which he was about to conduct his chosen wife and Queen.

The ship which bore the royal pair had not long put forth to sea, before there arose a great storm, which at once drove it from its intended course, and threatened destruction to all on board.

Notwithstanding the imminent peril which, under these circumstances, awaited the condition of his beloved Thaisa—for her hour of travail was evidently close at hand—he was compelled to remain on deck, in order, by his presence, to sustain the sinking courage of the sailors.

While thus engaged, and when the tempest

was at its height, Lychorida appeared before him, with a new-born infant in her arms, which during a momentary lull in the storm, also presented to Pericles, saying to him—

"Here, my gracious Lord—here, in this tender thing, too young for either grief or fear, behold all that is left of your dead Queen."

Thunder-stricken as Pericles was by those terrible words, they scarcely seemed to move him—so loud and urgent were the claims on his courage and prudence, which now immediately presented themselves; for the sailors, thus learning the death of the Princess, and finding that the storm rather increased than abated, became clamorous for the instant disposal of the corpse of Thaisa; deeming, in their superstitious fear, that the tempest would never cease while the dead body remained on board.

The choice of evils was terrible for Pericles: but the sight of his infant left him no hesitation between them. He descended to where his lost treasure lay, caused a large chest to be brought to him, and softly placed the body within it, which bad previously been tenderly wrapt by Lychorida in such garments as were at hand. Pericles then gazed silently for a few moments, on the face that lay in its calm pale beauty before him; and as he gazed, his soul seemed leaving him, to enter for the last time that holy temple, at whose now extinguished altar the homage of his living love had so lately been paid. So still and statuelike had grown the expression of that countenance, it seemed to send forth an influence all about it, which hushed (for the ear of the rapt gazer at least) the very storm itself that raged without.

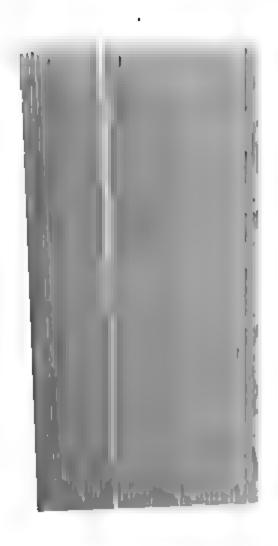
But presently, the human voices of the sailors clamoured away the solemn calm that enfolded the Prince, and recalled him to het duties which beset him. Casting his thoughts hastily around him, he

had Lychorida bring him implements of writing; waiting which, he placed carefully on the shrouded breast of his dead lady, a regal ornament of jewels, which she had worn on her marriage-day. He also placed on either side of her, small bags of rare perfumes, and rich spices, hoping thereby to preserve that beautiful form, and those serene features, from that corruption, the mere imagination of which seemed to turn his heart into stone. Then, writing on a scroll her name and condition when in life, and begging, from whom soever the words might reach, the holy rites of prayer and sepulture, he closed the lid upon that face and form which had lately been dearer to him than all the world besides: caused the seams of the chest to be so prepared and secured, that no drop of water could enter them; and then cast his dead treasure to the booming waters, bidding it, as it disappeared beneath them, to lie in peace among the simple shells.

Often we pay as dearly for our follies, as we always do for our crimes: for this one act of weakness—this wrong compliance with the ignorant superstition of his sailors—the wise and virtuous Pericles paid by twenty years of unavailing grief!

As if to confirm the strange superstition of the sailors, the storm abated almost immediately the devouring waves had received this sad tribute to their power; and presently the sea grew calm and still as the sleeping infant at whom Pericles stood gazing through his tears, unconscious that the storm was not still raving round about him.

On the mists clearing away, the sailors discovered that their vessel was close upon the coast of Tharsus; learning which the bereaved Prince seemed, as it were, to gather up the remnants of his shipwrecked hopes, and hang them round the tender image of his still sleeping infant, as men hang coronals of flowers on the monumental effigies of those



have met the plaintive cry.

That little:
heart, and see
of new duties,
bad hitherto d
him all extern
gave directions
immediately be
of Tharsus, wh.
in safety.

At Tharsus, I find a grateful f Governor, and to his dear babe, th her sea-birth), until the period was on the point of expiring which Helicanus had named as the necessary limit of his return to Tyre; —when he left her, and at length arrived in safety in his own kingdom, and resumed his beneficent sway; his infant daughter (in dread of the long sea-voyage at that perilous season) being consigned to the care and training of the grateful Cleon, and his seemingly virtuous wife, Dioniza, who had recently given to her lord a daughter, with whom she promised that Marina should be bred up as a sister in all things.



CHAPTER VIII.

WE must now recur to the morning following the day on which Thaisa's body had been so hastily consigned by Pericles to the devouring waves.

On that morning there was walking and watching on the seashore of Ephesus, the wise and learned Cerimon—wise, that he used his great learning and knowledge to wise and good ends. He was waiting and watching the chance that his acquaintance with medicine, and the secrets that are lodged in herbs, plants and flowers, and even in the dead stones, might be turned to the good and comfort of those unfortunate sea-goers whom the

great tempest of the previous night might cast upon the shore..

As he wandered thoughtfully with this end, Cerimon, on turning a small jutting head-land, perceived at a little distance two fishermen, who were engaged about a large chest, which appeared to have been just drifted on to the strand, from the bosom of the receding waters.

Confirmed by this circumstance in his expectation that a shipwreck must have taken
place on their coast, Cerimon concerted with
the fishermen that they should bring their
treasure (for such, from its great weight,
they supposed it to be,) to his dwelling near
at hand; promising to satisfy them for the
value of their good-fortune, and then intending to preserve the contents of the chest,
whatever they might be, till it should appear
whether or not the unfortunate owners would
claim them.

On arriving with their beavy burden at the

dwelling of Cerimon, the fishermen were eager that the chest should be opened and examined immediately, and instruments were procured for that purpose.

No sooner was the lid of the chest lifted a. finger's breadth from its position, than the apartment in which they stood was filled with the breath of rich spices and perfumes, and the standers-by were confirmed in their hopes that they had found a valuable treasure: for such merchandize was estimated at its weight in fine silver, and even in gold. But Cerimon, on perceiving this intimation of the nature of the chest's contents, checked the eagerness of the fishermen, and caused them to proceed in their work with extreme care and caution; as if impressed with the belief that the circumstance which had excited their mingled curiosity and cupidity arose from a cause very different from that to which they attributed it.

The peculiar odour of the spices and per-

possession
on removin
a rich scar
neath, they
female, clot
costly garr
those of the
hands lying
the richly-c
the breast a
fell upon it,
thing.

The fisher
Cerimon, we
before them

satisfied whether they looked upon a sober reality or a vision of the brain. But Cerimon, after gazing for a few moments on the face that lay in its marble repose beneath his sight, felt a sudden flush come over all his frame, as if some secret sympathy was stirring within him. The next moment, as he still gazed, a tremor passed throughout him, and his lips, as if unconsciously, and without communication with his thoughts, uttered,

"This lady lives!"

The words, as they fell upon the ear of him who uttered them, seemed to arouse him from a momentary trance of mingled awe and astonishment; at once he resumed his self-possession; and, ere he spake another word, he seized upon a scroll which lay beside the hand of the seeming corpse, and unfolding it, read as follows:—

"Here I give to understand,
(If e'er this coffin drive a-land),
I, King Pericles, have lost
A Queen worth all our mundane cost.

VOL. III.



"No, no
"We bury t
lady lives, if
Life, grew o
The daughte
forth to the !
What may th
to the effect."
And instant
a an inner o
presently removes
which thought
the finne of life
lying domain

he caused soft music to be sounded in an adjoining chamber; for he feared that if the lady's senses were awakened too suddenly, or the view of external objects were presented to her bodily vision before the soul or spirit had been called into life by that mysterious communion which reaches it through the ear alone, and in sleep equally as in the waking hours, the sudden surprise and terror of finding herself among strangers, and in such unwonted circumstances, would defeat all his hopes at the very moment of their fruition, and give her back to Death while in the very act of snatching her from his grasp.

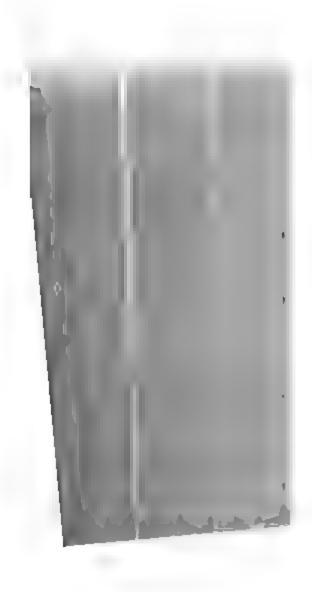
Still and pale she lay as a marble statue, and Cerimon was gazing upon her with an intent look of half-doubting sadness, when, as the keen music without uttered a plaintive fall,—lo! a faint colour,—is it not so?—passes for a moment into her cheeks and lips, and then again it is gone! Or was it fancy? for now she is pale as before, and no metion tells:

phrase of less faint changes t of life! beneath it she lives! themselves had scarce move, an them.

"My Lo
Where am
heaven... \
During
which wer
took the fo

matron, the favourite companion and instructress of his own daughter, (for Cerimon mourned a widowed bed,) whom he had, in his confident hope of the lady's recovery, carefully tutored in the needful treatment during the first moments of her renewed life; for he knew that a relapse at such a moment would be fatal.

Finally, all things befel as the good Cerimon wished. But the Lady Thaisa, thus born to a new life, in which she found herself bereaved of all that had hitherto been dear to her, and, above all, a something dearer than all, which she seemed to lament the more that she had never known it, (for all her efforts could not recal to her memory with certainty that she was or had been a mother);—the Lady Thaisa, as she recollected, one by one, the blessings she had lost, scarcely knew at first whether to lament or rejoice over the life that had been given back to her. Still she knew not but she was a mother and a wife;



which she hope grade heart, who learning the dedicated within its delicated within its delicated the her the pet failed the heart heart pure do

PART IL

CHAPTER IX.

Barwaren the first part of our Tale, and that which now opens, an interval of sixteen years has clapsed; touching the events of which years our purpose requires no further detail than the statement that Pericles, on his return to his kingdom at the expiration of the twelve months named by Helicanus, found his people in rebellion against the delegated rule of his beloved tutor and friend, instigated thereto by the cabals of an ambitious and wicked lord of the court, who had succeeded in placing himself in the chief rule, in banishing

a dungeo There, Tale now a patient ceeding y cause of within hin lieve that prosper e the dust. and daily image of t Tharsus she returne doubly sad At lengt!

on the government of Tyre was dissolved by his sudden and violent death; and the people of the land, whose loving memory of their former Prince and his wise Minister was still strong within them, concerted measures for the recall of Helicanus, supposing that the retreat of the Prince himself might be, known to him: for the concealment of Pericles had been so cunningly contrived that no hint of it had ever reached the public ear. Now, however, that the two minions of the dead usurper, who had ministered so successfully to his guilty designs, found that they could no longer hope to profit by their labours in his service, they fled from Tyre with their guilty gains, leaving behind them (for they cherished no animosity against the imprisoned Prince,) certain indications, which at once led to his release. And the very day which witnessed the return of Helicanus from his forced exile, saw Pericles once more seated on the throne of his beloved Tyre.

)at em ms during si blank as visible in all the cir Pericles : duties.] Helicanu people, be face of t Tharsus; misgiving any that h of impriso But we and inqui

During all

ing in beauty and in virtue, under the grateful care of the good Cleon and his wife Dioniza; taught and tended with scarcely less fondness and devotion than their own daughter, the gentle Lelia, and using that teaching to such ends that she was now accomplished in every feminine art and feature of learning; and she was even more gifted in body than in mind.

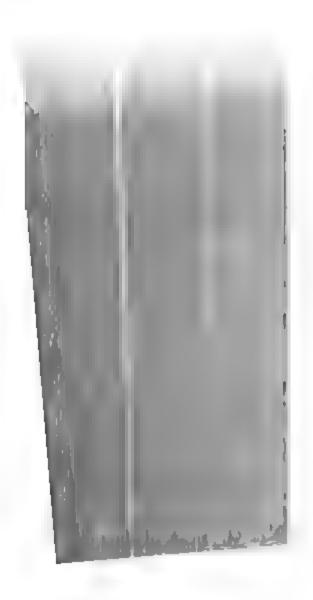
Not so with her sweet companion, Lelia, who, as the friends (both nearly of an age) verged on womanhood, fell off in external beauty in proportion as she progressed in intellectual growth and acquirement; so that, while the bodily and the mental perfections of Marina served to set off and heighten each other, the beauties of Lelia's mind seemed, in the eyes of her doting mother, to contrast painfully with the growing defects of her person.

No sooner had this impression fixed itself in the mind of Dioniza than a total change seemed to take place in her character. The

way sudde for her fos in the bu her, when observed, over her o alone of F mother's p qualificatic those of he looked, or, she could h bled her; young strai and hourly, upon her he and loving

heart and soul, to its foul suggestions; and as great ones ever find instruments at hand, ready to work their will, be it wicked or virtuous, she had presently arranged with. Leonine, a lord of the court, that the beautiful Marina should, at all hazards, be got rid of.

This project, however, required great caution, as well as cunning, in the management of its details; for Dioniza knew that no arguments or persuasions could induce the good Cleon to consent to any treatment of Marina inconsistent with his almost parental fondness for her, and the gratitude to her father, of which that fondness was at once the offspring and the type. It was therefore determined, after many consultations between Dioniza and her creature, the Lord Leonine, that he should secretly enter into terms with certain pirates who were known to frequent that coast, and to whom facilities should be given to carry off the royal maiden, while she:



and attende
This guil
then it was
success, but
the wicked
amply punis
means of the
which it outs
violent seizus
their vessel of
sarily took pla
whose behoof
her short-sigl
shock and also
sach the she

she withered day by day; so that, within one moon's course from the day of Marina's loss, the gentle Lelia was laid in an early grave,—over which her desolate parents wept themselves away in a speechless grief, which was made tenfold bitter in the breast of Dioniza, by the remorse that blended with it.



CHAPTER X.

Dioniza for the loss of both their children (for such they now felt them both to have been—the one equally with the other), that Pericles arrived at Tharsus, in search of tidings of his infant child; and not till those tidings were communicated to him was the measure of Cleon's grief and Dioniza's remorse completed: for on his receiving the news of his beloved infant (she was still as an infant to him, for so only had he known and thought and dreamed of her)—on his receiving the news of her having grown up to woman's estate, a type and model of every virtue and beauty,

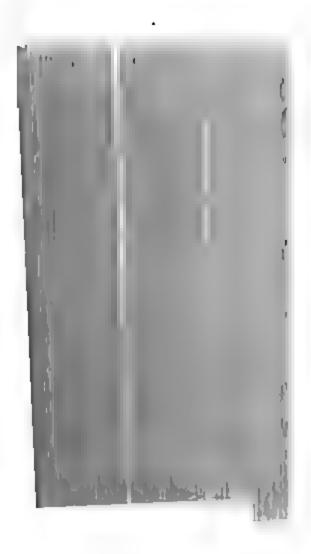
VOL. III.

only to be torn from him for ever, and by fate which he felt to be worse even than dea itself; just, too, as he was on the eve taking her to his arms and heart, to bless he and himself through her, in what he migh have hoped to find an enduring peace wa contentment; his mind and soul seems stricken as if with a mighty blow, that shoe them to their very foundations, as an earth quake shakes the solid mountain, and rives its its base. His reason became on the instant wreck; his heart seemed turned into stone the fountains of his tears were dried up; hi tongue uttered no word but the one gree outery which marked the terrible change the was in an instant worked within him; an the wise and noble and kind and princel Pericles of yesterday, was to-day an object to be pitied by the very beggar that stood a his gate.

And so for a while we are compelled t leave him, in the care and tendance of hi good minister and friend, the faithful Helicanus, who had attended him on this expedition,—while we follow the fortunes of the innocent cause of all this sorrow and desolation.

No sooner had the pirates conveyed Marina on board their vessel, and looked with unhurried eyes on the treasure which had thus been consigned to them by Fortune, than their savage natures were touched with a new sense, as if from heaven: for there was about the beauty of Marina that divine halo of innocence, which, to those who first look upon it in its tender grief, has something more awful than the frown of a sculptured divinity, yet more touching and purifying than the sense of a present and absorbing sorrow.

Now that the first burst of surprise and indignation had subsided in Marina, all the terror of her situation seemed to have passed away, and a spirit to have descended upon her, which gave her absolute command over



od to bein cence, wh of ill, and any destir thoughts, made and So there and half-s and riotous still face beamed fro glowing sk been some c ing from th temple of i And so,

thing noble, which would not let them even think of offering harm or outrage to the pale innocence that appeared to put faith in them, any more than if she had really been the dead image that she seemed.

Away that light vessel bounds like a happy living thing over the bright waters, until it reaches the distant shores of Mitylene, where those pirates have determined to carry their prize; and during all that long course no hand has profaned with its unholy touch, no eye has looked on with unseemly passion, that majestic Innocence which sits enthroned there in its calm silence, as if ill could not come near it. Even the grief that at first marked (without marring) those still, grave features, has now utterly passed away, and nothing dwells there but that faith in things unseen which, when it is taxed to the uttermost, as it here was, absorbs in its glowing vortex all other instincts; making the memory a blank; shutting out the Present as with a curtain of hazy light, through which we are yet see it not; and making present the Future as the glass of the astronomer makes present the hidden lights of heaves.

And so did that innocent child-woman Marina, ride in triumph across the waters from Tharsus to Mitylene, with a triumph to which that of the Egyptian Queen over the World's Master was as dust and ashes.



CHATSWORTER

CHAPTER XI.

Ms have said that the holy innocence of Marina had power to triumph over the rade nature and the savage passions of those sear robbers, who, for a little pelf which they spent recklessly in the gratification of those same passions, did not hesitate to tear her with violence from her happy home. But there is one degree of human vileness over which nothing good has power—in the presence of which no human sympathy can live: and at the mercy of such vileness it was the strange destiny of Marina to fall. May the Gods look down and watch over her: for they have permitted her—for their own wise ends—to be

placed within that innermost circle of human wickedness, where her very innocence itself will prove her worst enemy, and provide her deepest peril.

The pirates have moored their vessel of the harbour of Mitylene, and their chief has gone on shore, in the disguise of a slave-merchant, to judge in what way he may best ture to account the rich prize which fortune has thrown into his hands. He has scarcely stepped on shore from his boat, which awaits him at the quay with part of the crew, when he meets a friend, who is in converse with another (seeming) merchant; and he relates to the former his errand in those parts; extolling, in terms of Eastern hyperbole, the wondrous beauty of the female slave he would dispose of, but (by reason of the unlawful manner in which he came possessed of her) declaring that only on board his own vessel will he allow her to be seen, and will treat for the purchase of her.

249

The stranger, who had listened to the discourse of the pirate chief with a still indifference of feature which was contradicted by the cold cunning that looked through his hard, glazed eye, parted from the two conversers as the seeming merchant finished speaking; and as the latter went his way towards the market-place, the stranger followed him quickly, and entered into a conference with him, the result of which alone concerns our story.

Suffice it that, by nightfall, new terrors had seized on the soul of Marina, as she found herself consigned to the hands of that cold-eyed man, and of a being of her own sex, his companion, the first sight of whom (she knew nor guessed not why) filled her with an instinctive dread, with which the pirates themselves had at no time inspired her. As that foul woman—if woman she was—approached her, she shrunk with a sense of loathing, such as she had never before felt, even at the serpents and

crawling things that had crossed her path in her childish wanderings; and this feeling was blended with a kind of feminine sharm, which, ever and anon, as she looked upon her, sent blushes to her face, that seemed to speak the very air infected with the guilt that breathed from out that poisomous creature.

But this terrible feeling shook the soul of Marina for a brief space only; and it may be that the good Gods sent it to her, in answer to her silent prayers for help and aid in her strange sorrow, the better to fortify her soul for the extremity that awaited her.

Whether it were so or not, as those two pestilent creatures led Marina through the dark streets of Mitylene, to their darker abode at one extremity of the city, she breathed from about her all fear, as if it were in some sort a guiltiness to the Gods; and by the time they had conducted her to a

chamber, placed food of the best before her, and a lighted lamp, and had left her to herself, (during all which interval, from her first looking upon those two on board the pirate's vessel, she had uttered no word,) she once more felt within her that assurance of self-safety which had never wholly quitted her but while she looked upon the foul smile that seemed to stagnate round the mouth of that serpent woman. She was now, for the first moment since her seizure by the pirates, alone; and as she cast her eyes upward, as if to pierce the walls that shut out from her bodily sight alone the starlit heavens, a solemn calm seemed to descend thence upon her soul; she rose up for a moment, as if lifted by wings; and then, relapsing again to the seat she had for a moment quitted, she rested , upon her folded hand the marble paleness of a face into which had passed that superhuman beauty, in which the passions of earth

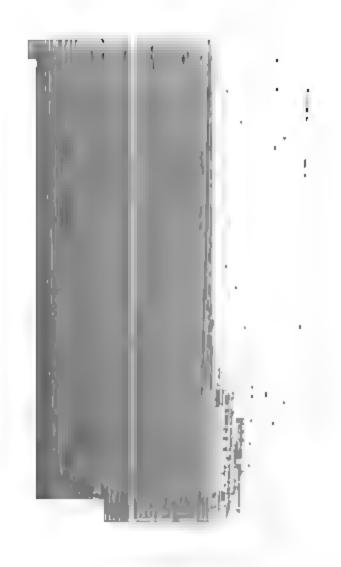
252

CHATSWORTH.

have no share and no sympathy; and there she sat, as if invulnerable to pain or fear, patiently waiting the will of the immortal Gods.

CHAPTER XII.

Before the evening of the day following that on which Marina had been conducted to the foul place which her presence for a space transformed into a temple of purity, certain wealthy lords and others of the luxurious city of Mitylene had been apprised of that presence, and invited to pay their golden homage at the shrine of this new idol; the hideous priestess of the temple having, by her vile eloquence, prepared them to behold such charms as no eye had before looked upon, even in that luxurious mart of Greek beauty. But as she had hitherto been unable, either by threats or by seeming kindness, to extract



living pe thought several (reception first meet tion on it result de each one thus be that wayv from whic it seems to Meanw shudderin_i of coming each time

that followed or informed them, no glimpse of the nature of her true situation had yet struck upon the thoughts of that incarnate innocence. All was mystery; a terrible sense of some strange vague danger hourly impending over her, but no shadow foreshowing its form, or the quarter whence it would come. So far, indeed, was she from comprehending the perils that beset her in that black abode of infamy and sin, that when, on the second day of her sojourn under its foul roof, she heard at her side the sickly voice of its presiding demon, bidding her prepare to receive presently, there where she sat, the visit of a great and wealthy lord of the city, she for the first time felt its scrannel tones fall on her sense without offending it; and the very words which told her that the dreaded danger was approaching, seemed to inspire a hope that deliverance was at hand.

So soon as that foul creature had spoken her hurried errand, announcing the coming of

in a brithere et and dig in the limite limite limite limite strain where a the groundrew in upon hi rapidly seizing in You I knew forget or "Save the strain limite limite

and intense expression, like that with which worshipping mortals gaze upward at the sculptured images of their gods. "Save you? from what?" he repeated, for she spake not.

"Nay, I know not," she cried, "but 'tis something fatal. I feel it in my soul, now, as you look upon me:" for, as she still knelt before him, and held his hand, he gazed down upon her divine beauty, with eyes in which the earthly passion that brought him thither, had thrown a light that the pure and divine nature of that beauty did not wholly quench.

"What is it you fear, and whom?" continued he, placidly, while Marina, rising from where she knelt, resumed the seat she had occupied on his entrance. "It is not me you fear? I am here to love and cherish you. You are very beautiful."

As he spake he looked upon her as a father might look upon a beloved child, and the look reassured and steadied her wavering thoughts.

"You have come," she resumed, "to take me from this place, where vague terrors beach me that are ten times more terrible than the distinct ones in the midst of which I was brought hither. I know not what threatens me, and I would not know; but——" and she again fell upon her knees before him, "take me hence! I beseeck—I conjure—I command you!"

As she spoke these last words she once more rose to her feet, assumed an erect posture, and looked upon him with an air of proud and majestic innocence, blended with a touch of weeping and beseeching pathos, that moved at once his admiration and pity, and banished all remaining vestiges of that mere earthly passion which had for a moment blinded him to the true character of the young creature that stood before him.

"Take me hence!" she again exclaimed, as he continued to look upon her with mingled wonder and curiosity, but without speaking. "Take me from beneath this foul roof! I know not what it is that I dread beneath it, but my dread grows greater every moment. And even you, who are here to save me from its terrors, I dare not look steadfastly even upon you. There is that within your eyes—or was—"

As she spoke, she looked at him for a moment; a flush of confidence passed across her face; and she resumed, in a triumphant tone,—

"No; 'tis gone! and I am safe in your presence. Safe? I am blest and happy!"

As she spake, tears came into her eyes; she looked at him timidly for a few moments, as he stood gazing silently upon her; and then, she threw herself into his arms, and clung to him as if it had been a daughter or a sister long severed from a father's or a brother's embrace.

The Lord Lysimachus had great power and influence in Mitylene, and when he signified

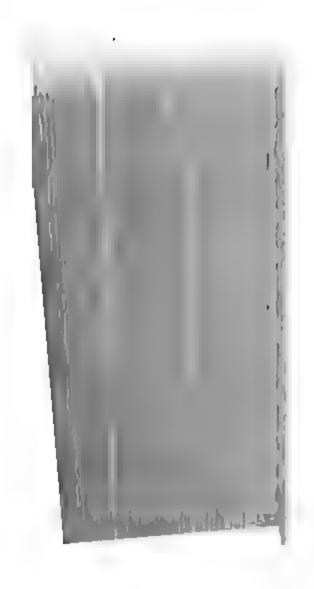
his intention of immediately removing Marina from the foul place in which he had found her, no obstacle was thrown in the way of his will, especially as his visits were made there in strict privacy, and it was therefore not doubted that he would reimburse these wretched traffickers in human vileness, even in the full sum they had paid to the pirates for the possession of Marina.

Accordingly, without waiting to learn a word of Marina's story, Lysimachus immediately and hastily departed from that spot as if he felt that some strange and dreadful danger awaited his longer stay there; and the now happy maiden accompanied him silently, but in full-hearted ease, withou seeking, or even desiring, to know whither he was conducting her. Had it been to the jaw of a living tomb she had cared not, so i removed her for ever from the power and th presence of that poisonous woman.

CHAPTER XIII.

Let us now return to the unhappy Pericles, who is once more a wanderer upon the face of the desolate waters; his own soul more desolate than they, but that one vague image seems to haunt and fly before it everywhere, keeping fixed to one point the spiritual life within him, that would else dissipate into blank vacuity.

The wise and good Helicanus, seeing the nature of his lord's new malady, believed that by giving to his distempered thoughts—or to the small remnant of them that was left to him—a specific object, he would prevent them from sinking into that utter stagnation,



of Pericles, I
rious union
from the spi
threatened th
no instrumen
indeed, was I
himself, touch
therefore taug
spoke no word
all things, as
nurse) to see I
a dim image of
it seemed eve
thoughts pursu
was still and

out of the sky when the moon was beneath the waters.

And so, day after day, and week after weary week, they sailed on and on, without any sound issuing from the lips of the bereaved Prince, but only those deep-drawn sighs which, while they told his grief, helped in some sort to temper it; since every one of them, in telling of a baffled hope, told also that hope itself was not dead within him. There he sat, or reclined, day by day, and night after night, upon a luxurious couch beneath the tent that had been erected on the deck of that gallant vessel, hoping on patiently, against hope, but uttering no word; save that sometimes, in the utter stillness of the night, when no one, not even his faithful Helicanus, was near him, he would step out from beneath his tent, and whisper to the passing waves the name of his sea-born child; MARINA, as if he hoped that the sound of that name might perchance conjure up to his



क काधक्र<u>िक</u> Petrobed by that they a less as he lead to a l princess, he वृष्णी हरोर्स व of his inqui confirming h assuage it, by case of his lo as if she were And to thi malady of Peri anived of the having never o

No sooner had the stately vessel of Pericles anchored in sight of Mitylene than a restlessness took possession of him, which greatly grieved Helicanus, since it weakened that hope of his lord's recovery which his late tranquil demeanour had nourished. Instead of steadfastly and with calm features looking forth into the dim distance, as Pericles had hitherto done while their vessel was careering before the wind on its gallant course, he now, by fits and starts, rose from his couch beneath the tent, and came out upon the deck, peering everywhere about, with restless, inquiring eyes, as one who has suddenly discovered the loss of something that is precious to him. Moreover, he would now hang over the side of the vessel for many minutes together, looking down strait into the depth of the sparkling waters, as if something met or avoided his gaze there; and Helicanus immediately perceived that his malady had assumed a new phase; that his imagination was once more

figuring forth the sad array of images which attended the ominous birth of his Marina; and that the fatal event which followed it was again present to him.

And so it was, but divested of its terrors, and seen, as we sometimes see fearful objects in a dream, without fearing them, or seeming to feel that they are invested with anything to fear. Pericles was indeed looking down into the dim depths beside the anchored vessel, as it heaved under the swelling waters, and trying if he could catch one last look at the rude receptacle which, sixteen years ago, received and presently bore away from his straining sight all that was then dear to it; and, for the moment, he had forgotten that any other affection had since occupied his bereaved heart.

Meanwhile the messengers from the vessel, having reported the name and rank of Pericles and Helicanus, and the occasion of their visit to that shore, the governor of Mitylene Lysimachus among them, repaired on board the Tyrian bark, to tender their respects to its royal master, who instantly, on perceiving their approach, retired to the innermost recesses of his tent; and Helicanus felt that it would be vain as cruel to allow any intrusion on his grief. He therefore received the Lords of Mitylene with all courtesy, but signified to them the unhappy state of his royal patient, and explained to them its cause, as a reason for not conducting them to the presence of Pericles, or even announcing to him their advent.

While conversing on the melancholy nature of the intellectual malady which afflicted the royal Wanderer, and the strange feature by which it exhibited itself in the present instance,—namely, the wordless and death-like silence of the sufferer, which they all agreed was likely to aggravate rather than allay the ills over which it brooded,—Lysimachus in-

quired of Helicanus whether he had tried the effect of music, in melting the seeming frozen fountains of tears and of speech; "but tween which," he said, "there existed some mysterious sympathy which, if awakened into life by the voice of melody, might cause the two streams once more to flow forth in health-giving current of life and joy."

Helicanus replied by explaining the absence, on board their vessel, of all appliance for such a purpose, but expressed his faith it the tales he heard told of music's power is medicining the ailments of the mind. O which Lysimachus proceeded to say the there was a foreign maiden dwelling in Mity lene, whose art and voice conjoined were the delighted wonder of all who heard them, an might move a soul that was in thrall to deat itself: and he besecched Helicanus to I him return to the city, and fetch this strangel gifted creature, to essay her power upon the afflicted Prince.

CHATSWORTH,

Helicanus knew not what course to take; for he had determined in no particular to curb or constrain the will of his royal master, who, he was well assured, would not voluntarily quit the recesses of his tent while a single stranger remained on board the vessel. After considering for a few moments, however, and inquiring as to the station and calling of the maiden, he arranged with Lysimachus that, after the Governor and his attendants had returned on shore, Lysimachus himself should, if she were willing, bring the maiden on board, and they would then consult as to the course best to be pursued in carrying their experiment into effect.



Ir should machus had terrible dang her in safety who occupie palace, he th to visit her, the hope of friends from but the most

almost tearful gratitude, which gave to her stately and almost supernatural beauty a character which at once brought it to the level of that human love above which it had hitherto seemed to soar, as if on wings. In his interview with her on the previous night, that mere earth-bred passion with which he had for a moment looked upon her, had been instantly and utterly dissipated, by the scene which had passed between them; and during the brief tumult of that scene, he had scarcely looked upon her at all; being wholly absorbed in his honourable desire of instantly rescuing her from that danger, and removing her from that pollution, which, he never for a single moment doubted, she herself had had no share in incurring. When, therefore, Lysimachus looked upon Marina now, he seemed to see her for the first time.

In truth, there had passed into the face of that fair creature, during the brief period between her deliverance from the unknown dangers of the previous night, and the precence of her deliverer, a something which, under different circumstances, it might have taken the work of years to generate—a metamorphosis like one of those which the poets of her country have described, as suddenly changing the very nature of the being subjected to it, yet leaving it even more human than before. In a word, the glowing picture—tha breathing statue—the bright and blooming girl, of yesterday, had been transmuted, by the mingled influence of gratitude, admiration, and incipient love, into the radiant and perfect woman; -and as Lysimachus looked upon her as she rose to meet him on his entrance to his sister's apartment, a new sense seemed to come to him, which made him at once forget the object of his errand,

Yet was there something blended with the feelings both of Lysimachus and Marina during this brief meeting, which made them wish it to have an end,—each seeming every moment to fear that the other would speak something which would break the mysterious spell that had taken possession of their souls—or rather, that seemed to have now for the first time conjured up a soul within them.

Having silently communed with herself for a brief space after the hasty departure of Lysimachus, Marina suddenly addressed herself to his sister, and preferred a request that she might be permitted to quit the splendours that surrounded her, and might be allowed, if the customs of their island sanctioned it, to exercise, with a view to satisfying her few and humble wants, those feminine arts, of music, singing, and embroidery, which she had learned in the distant land whence she came.

This request led to inquiries respecting her story and her condition; to which she replied that her country was Tharsus, but that she had never known her parents. And as she evidently desired to speak no further on

these topics, they were not pressed upon

Marina's strange request that she might immediately leave the palace, and seek home for herself, was conveyed to Lysimachi by his sister,—who was not a little surprise when, on learning what had passed respecting the maiden's birth and station, he threw at obstacle in the way of her desire ;-on the contrary, he suggested the most fitting means of carrying her wishes into effect; and the next day found Marina in a humble dwelling provided with all things needful to her comfort by the care of Lysimachus and his sister, and also accompanied (to her evident delight) by a staid matron from the household of Lysimachus, who acted towards her in the double capacity of attendant and friend And thus Marina had remained, apparently happy in the calm monotony of her seclusion -which was only broken by occasional visits from the sister of Lysimachus, and a few or

the noble matrons of Mitylene, who, through her intervention, brought their daughters to be instructed in the beautiful arts which Marina practised with a perfection never before witnessed in that city.

On one or two occasions, Lysimachus had accompanied his sister in her visits to the young and gifted stranger. But lately, though a thoughtful air, amounting almost to sadness, had seemed to his fond sister to be growing more and more over the gay and brilliant spirit of her noble brother, she could never persuade him to renew those visits, in which he had at first seemed to take so much pleasure. Indeed, on the last occasion of his accompanying his sister to the residence of Marina, he had been moved and affected as she had never before seen him, by a song of her childhood, which the maiden had offered to sing them: and from that day Lysimachus could never again be persuaded to join his sister in her visits to the beautiful orphan of Tharsus.

Thus then matters stood when Lysimach determined that, accompanied by his sist he would seek the stranger maiden, explain her the occasion of their visit, and ask her essay the power of her divine art upon the flicted Prince, the news of whose arrival off the coast, though it had made so much stir Mitylene, had not reached the calm seclusion of Marina's new home.

Somewhat to the surprise of Lysimach Marina readily, and almost eagerly, consent to accompany them on this strange but generand. And now, behold the three, approacing the vessel of Pericles, just as the glaing sun is slowly sloping towards the west horizon, and clothing the whole face of waters with a garment of molten gold.

CHAPTER XV.

During the absence of Lysimachus the good Helicanus has visited the retirement of Pericles, and found that although no material change has taken place in his malady, a deeper calm seems to rest upon his afflicted spirit than has been observable since their departure from Tharsus; and he is tempted to augur favourably of his condition, and is less doubtful than before as to the prudence of the experiment proposed by Lysimachus.

Meantime the barge which conveys the little party approaches the vessel, unseen by Pericles, though he has once more left the inner recesses of his tent, and is seated on his couch, looking forth upon the open sea: the tide has changed the position of the ver in respect of the city, and the approachi barge will reach it without being visible the royal mourner. It has so reached it, gli ing softly over the waveless waters; and, compliance with a signal from Helicanus, t party ascend the side, without speech audible sound.

Lysimachus and Helicanus talk apart whispers for a few minutes, and then Helicanus enters the tent of Pericles; while Lysim chus joins his sister and Marina, and spea to them, still in whispers that are only audil to those for whom they are syllabled. Ly machus and his sister then retire to a sisome distance back, behind the tent Pericles, and Marina advances towards to opening of the tent, bearing in her handalyre.

Before she strikes it, let us enter the te where Pericles and Helicanus are sitting silence, the one looking forth with an intent calm upon the calm waters that stretch out interminably beneath his gaze; while the other gazes upon him, from beneath bent brows that speak a desire to penetrate into the very soul of him on whom they bend.

Hark! a sound!—Is it a sound? or the silence that comes of the momentary stillness of the waters that ever lapse softly against the vessel's side? No—a sound floats past the opening of the tent, and trembles away into silence, in the liquid air beyond.—Again! And this time it enters the tent where Pericles is sitting, and seems to fill it with a fine essence, that blends with his spirit, unconsciously to the sufferer, but not without showing its subtle influence to the searching eyes of Helicanus.

As the sweet sounds swell and gather strength, yet without for a moment losing their softness, an almost evanescent smile rises for an instant round the sad, patient mouth of

Pericles, and then is lost where it rose, and his face relapses into that utter calm which has something even more awful in it than that which dwells upon the face of the dead.

The preluding music has ceased; but, at a motion of the hand of Helicanus on the outer curtain of the tent, it recommences, and there is blended with it, after the vibration of the first few notes, a new sound, as of a human voice;—for nothing else was ever yet so searching sweet—sweet as the honey of Hybla—searching as the sting that guards it. And see! as it penetrates and pervades the air about him, the countenance of Pericles awakens as if from sleep; the calm and the sadness are gone from it; the lips are apart; the late glazed eyes have life within them; and the whole face listens intently.

After a brief space the voice and the instrument cease together. And then, Pericles turns to Helicanus, where he is sitting, and speaks—for the first time since they quitted the shores of Tharsus.

"Helicanus, what is this? Have I dreamed? Or did I hear the sound of strange, sweet music?"

"My Lord did not dream," said Helicanus; the sounds he heard——"

"Will they return?" asked Pericles, interrupting his reply.

"They will, at my Lord's pleasure."

"But the voice?" cried Pericles, eagerly.

"There was a voice among them—not a human voice, but one from heaven—will that return? No, no—I must have dreamed it. I have dreamed something like it before."

"All will return at my Lord's will," said Helicanus, though he almost doubted, from this unlooked-for result of his experiment, whether he might dare to increase the strange excitement, by continuing it.

"But the voice?" resumed Pericles—"Will that return? No, no. I have listened for it.

is beneath them—it cannot come again. Sixteen years it has been mute——"

Helicanus perceived that Pericles, as he spoke these last words musingly, to himself, was relapsing into that deadly calm which he now dreaded more than the strange excitement into which the singing and the music of the maiden had awakened him; and by another motion with his hand upon the curtain of the tent, he caused the sounds without to be resumed—the voice of the singer prevailing among them more audibly than heretofore.

Pericles listened with rapt delight as before but, at the first pause, his countenance fell and he turned to Helicanus quickly, and again spoke.

"Helicanus, What is this? whence is it Trifle not with my sorrows. This renewed memory of the dead, kills the hope that yo have taught me to cherish for the living." Helicanus now saw that the time was come when all the mystery attending his experiment must be banished.

"The sounds my dear Lord has heard," said he, "are bred of the voice and hand of a simple maiden of Mitylene. The fame of her wondrous skill was reported to me, and I hoped it might please my dear Lord to hear her."

"A maiden of Mitylene? Where is she?" inquired Pericles eagerly.

"She is without," replied Helicanus, "accompanied by a lady of the island, who protects and watches over her; for she is an orphan, and strangely beautiful."

"Let me see her!" cried Pericles. "Yet stay. You knew my lost Thaisa—No, no."—Then, after a musing pause, he repeated slowly, "Let me see this maiden."



Helicanus i
with him wer
memory of th
voice of Ma
benighted sor
blank—voicel
things within
calm vague I
brood there, as
as the Dove co

chus, he was stricken with disappointment and grief, at seeing his royal master seated on his couch, his eyes directed towards the distant horizon, but, in all other respects wrapped in that blank vacuity which had possessed him ever since their departure from Tharsus, except during the brief interval above described.

The entrance of Helicanus and the two strangers did not in any manner move Pericles from the stony stillness in which he sat; nor did he reply, by look or motion, when Helicanus signified to him that the maiden he had desired to see stood before him. Out upon the distant waters he continued to gaze silently; while the sad patience pictured on his noble countenance, seemed to tell that all the realities of the outward world were as nothing to him, in presence of those blessed shadows which brooded over his brain, and with their immortal wings winnowed away those harpy

thoughts which had else dis-seated his reason from her throne.

On Helicanus' perceiving the condition of his royal patient, he spoke for some time apart with Marina, and then the maiden advanced slowly towards Pericles, and stood beside him for a few moments in silence. But he seemed totally unconscious of her presence, and still looked forth silently on the silent sea. She then spoke, in a soft, low voice, which something within her—she knew not what—seemed to touch with a sweetness that almost brought tears into her own eyes as she heard it.

"Will my Lord please to hear the finish of the poor song I sang but now?"

She had not pronounced half these few words, ere Pericles started, as if some magic influence had touched his inmost soul. His face again awakened into eager life, and as she ceased to speak, he looked towards the spot whence the sounds came, and beheld her

where she stood. A faint cry escaped his opened lips as he looked upon her, and then he sank upon the couch from which he had half risen, and his arms fell listlessly by his side, and his head drooped upon his breast. As suddenly, he roused himself as if with a strong effort, looked upon her again for a moment, and then pressed both his hands upon his closed eyes.

"No, no," he exclaimed, mournfully—" the mad waves swallowed her.—Mad? It is I who am mad.—Why 'tis sixteen years ago! Yet 'tis a sweet madness!"

The tears which had risen to the eyes of Marina as she looked upon the Prince and addressed him, now flowed down her cheeks, at the sight of his great sorrow. But they did not prevent her from again speaking to him.

"Will not my Lord bid me sing to him again? If my Lord has sorrows, I can match them with my own."

"Again!" exclaimed Pericles—"'tis the again!" And now he started to his feet of removed his hands from before his eyes, at looked firmly upon the form and visage i Marina; and as he looked, all grief and to late wild accompaniment seemed, as it were to melt away out of his countenance, and there passed into it, instead, a gleam of gracious joy, as if a new kind of life workindling up within him.

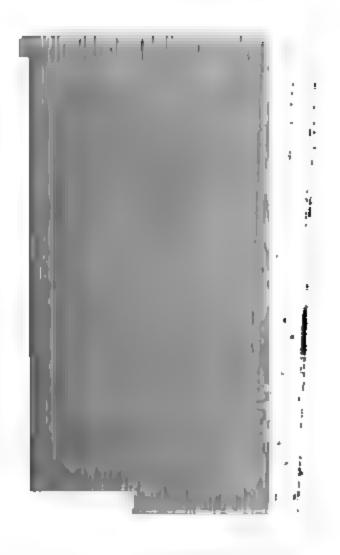
"Who is it speaks to me?" he said, calmly then hurriedly, as she seemed addressing he self to reply—"Do not answer me—I kno it cannot be. And yet it is—it mall be—for a space at least—it is so very sweet." H looked at her tenderly, but intently, for a fe moments, and then went on. "Pardon m gentle maiden, if I gaze on you too rudely but your voice has put a new seeing into min eyes, and they clothe that which I look upon with the form and features proper to the voice alone. For so it must be. I dare no

think you are like that you seem like—though to me you grow more like, every moment as I look upon you. Oh, speak again, that the weet spell may last."

"My Lord's gentleness," said Marina, "and the sorrow that seems to blend with it, make me feel as if I could speak to him for ever, and tell him, for his comfort, of griefs—great, it may be, as his own."

"Griefs?" echoed the Prince, as he still gazed on her intently—at that word for the first time receiving any impression from the speech of the maiden, beyond the mere sound of that voice which seemed to fill all his soul. "Griefs? Well, I would hear of griefs—only of griefs—for joy cannot again come near me. Yet does that voice of thine call up the ghosts of buried joys, at every syllable it utters. Come, sit by me—here, by my side."

And he once more placed himself calmly on the couch, and motioned her to approach him; vol. III.



as he spand I wi
cannot e
told, or I
tell them
spell that
my heart,
now—nor
voice—for
not—my
like a her
tears into
to his ey
"See—tea

"Will it ease my Lord more to hear another's griefs, or to speak his own? Mine none have heard; for they are so sad and strange, I feared to tell them until now. But now, as I sit here by my Lord, fear seems to have left me, and I long to tell him—but no—his own sorrows press upon him too heavily for his gentleness to bear the weight of another's."

"Strange!" said Pericles, musingly, as she paused, and without seeming to have received the purport of her words—"Strange! she grows liker and more like, even as I look and listen to assure myself 'tis not so. Well, sweet one," he continued, after a brief pause, "I will tell you what has put this grief upon me, and you shall help to weep it away. I owe this to the voice that has opened the fountains of my own tears, and made them drop like pleasant balm on wounds that death alone can cure."

Marina folded her hands before her, looked intently up into his face, and addressed her-



At the Marina, a her face, and a fair he contin "You above the station. with the much he beggar's I, maiden double so change c myself bl I was a K me, and w

heart—not even the heart of a King; for kings are men, and the heart of man is a throne where only one can sit. I sought that one, and found her, and was blest—blest for a whole brief year of blessedness. It was in foreign lands that I sought and found her, and not as a King; though she, a King's daughter, loved and gave herself to me."

At these last words Marina was again moved from that intent stillness with which she listened to the tale of Pericles. The light of a vague thought passed rapidly across her face—as the image of a shooting star flits over the surface of a still water. She scarcely knew the import of that thought; but it touched her more nearly than the other had done, and she listened more intently than ever.

"We wedded, and were one; and when she knew me as a King, she loved me the more that I had wooed and won her as a simple knight. Well—for a year—a long, brief year

which awaited us in the hearts of thousands, in the far-off land whence I had come. This was not well; for men's duties rise with their condition, and it is not given to kings to spend their lives upon themselves. It may be that for this the Gods saw fit to punish us. Well—we left the land of her birth, to seek mine, where troubles that only my presence could quell (so special missives informed me) made peremptory demand for my return. At this time ——"

Here he paused for a moment, but presently continued——

"I know not how it is—but I cannot name her name, not even to you, whose voice so minds me of her, that it makes me think you almost look like her."

He gazed at her mournfully, as he said this, and the tears that had come up into his eyes as he named in thought the name of his lost one, went down his thin, pale cheeks, and he seemed shaken with a strange passion, as if he looked at once upon the living and the dead. He struggled with the feeling that seemed growing momently stronger within him, and then continued hurriedly, and as if opposing force to force.

"Well—at this period she was near to being a mother."

The last word died upon his lips, almost without reaching the intent ear of Marina; a passion of grief overcame him, that he made no effort to conceal; and that stately man wept audibly before the watching maiden, like a suffering child. But there was balm in those copious tears, that almost cured the ills from which they sprang. He had not fairly wept till now, and as the bitter waters welled forth, they seemed to soften the image over which they flowed, as the flowing waters of the sea soften into fairness the form of the sunken rock over which they flow.

When he had wept for a space, Pericles

seemed to awaken as if with a new heart in his breast; the weight and the pain had gone from it, and the stony hardness which had of late refused to receive any impress from without, had softened into that sympathy with other hearts which is the only sure and sovereign medicine for all human ills. He turned to Marina, as she sat gazing on him with a yearning sympathy which precluded speech or thought, and smiling upon her fondly, took the small hand that lay on the couch beside him, and said—

"Forgive this selfishness of sorrow, which is its worst ill, and worst in great ones, who should controul or conquer it. You spoke of griefs; but your soft sympathy with mine has made you forget them. Tell them to me. It may be I can help or cure them: it were poor to be a King else."

"But your own, Sir?" replied Marina, anxiously. "May I not know the end of them? Indeed, as yet you have told me only

of your joys' completion. But alas! that seems the point whence sorrows have their natural birth. The lady whom you loved and wedded, and ——"

"Not now," interrupted Pericles. "Hereafter—to-morrow. Suffice it now that—that I lost her—that I have lost her a second time in her child—that—Not now—do not ask me—for I feel that I must do what that voice of yours bids me, even though it be to wring your gentle nature with my own selfish griefs. Now tell me your griefs, that I may try to cure them. You have made me—I know not how—once more a King—in vain, if I cannot help to make others happy."

CHAPTER XVII.

MARINA paused for a few moments, as if the commune with herself, and collect he thoughts; and then she spoke.

even to the noble friends who have saved me from worse. My story is so strange, that I feared even they might doubt its truth none being by to verify it. And they have been so nobly good to me, that I could no bear to let them couple me with falseness even in thought. But something tells me that he who hears me now will know that I speak is true—even as the gods dowhen I speak it at their altars: he will feel—

—because he is all truth himself—that what I speak is true, even though I tell him that, sitting here beside him, poor, friendless, homeless, without a name, without a country, it may be without one living creature to know or care for me—I am nevertheless the daughter of a King, and of a King's daughter."

She was about to proceed; but at these last words, Pericles suddenly motioned with his hand, to stay her. Up to this moment, he had listened so intently to her voice, that the words it uttered had conveyed to his hearing only that vague sense which the words we hear in dreams leave upon the waking ear. But these last words — he heard no voice with them, but only the words themselves—"I am the daughter of a King, and of a King's daughter."

What should he do? Hear more, or question her?—Her voice?—Her look?—What were they but the creatures of his dis-



proceed; speech. brief wor heard it 1 them not. poreal sen her words of a King's -what wo Meanwh "My los that I was King's dau truth: I see confirm it t were here i beneath the waters—those very waters—so cruel, yet so gentle—that hushed the infant to its first slumbers, while they bore away its mother so utterly, that even a daughter's piety can never find her grave to weep over."

Again Pericles suddenly and peremptorily stopped the maiden in her story: and now he spoke—not without a mingling of sternness in his voice.

"Maiden, you have been taught to say this—some busy meddler has been trifling with my griefs. Go—fetch hither the Lord Helicanus.—No, stay; let me look upon thee once more."

He looked upon her intently for a few moments, and then his sternness left him, and an almost weeping gentleness passed into his voice and manner, as he continued:—

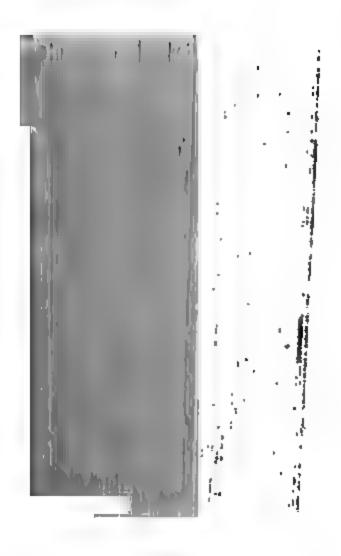
"Falsehood?—It cannot touch thee—it cannot live in thy presence. And yet that presence and that voice—those words too—

all of them tell me—but it cannot be so—all of them bid me call thee by the name of my sea-born child—Marina—my lost Thaisa's image!—'The daughter of a King, and of a King's daughter"—ran it not so?"

It was now the maiden's turn to be lost, for a space, in blank and speechless wonder and incredulity. Had she heard aright? Her own name, and her dead mother's, pronounced by strange lips in a strange land? And yet not strange; for something in that

substance pass into my soul—to tear it thence, or kill it there, would kill both. Once more, I look upon thee, and call thee my sea-born child, Marina—image and essence of my lost Thaisa! Answer me now, but not in words—I cannot bear to hear thy voice again, if hers speak not in it. I am Pericles of Tyre."

At the sound of that name, the maiden uttered an indistinct cry of joy, and the next moment she threw herself into the arms of her father, who, as he strained her to his bosom, lifted up his eyes and his heart to the Gods, in speechless gratitude, that words could not interpret.



Helicanus
Lysimach
kind sistes
riment, ne
brief detai
lene had
noble cond
him (the fe
Prince to
strong as i

hours, sank into a profound sleep; soothed thereto by the hushing sounds of his Marina's lute, as they blended with the liquid murmurs of the waves that whispered against the vessel's side.

But the sleep of Pericles, though deep, was happily not dreamless; for the thought of his child's peril in that foul place where her strange fortunes had carried her, blended with the last movements of his waking brain, and bred a vision there which bad him not seek his distant home, and end his Wanderings, till he had duly offered his grateful thanksgivings at the shrine of the chaste Diana, in her great Temple at far Ephesus; and on awaking in the morning of the morrow, with a new heart in his bosom, and a new life in his veins, he directed that the vessel should be turned thitherward without delay.

And now behold the happy Three, bound to that shore where, sixteen years ago, the bitter griefs of Pericles had begun, and where they vol. III.

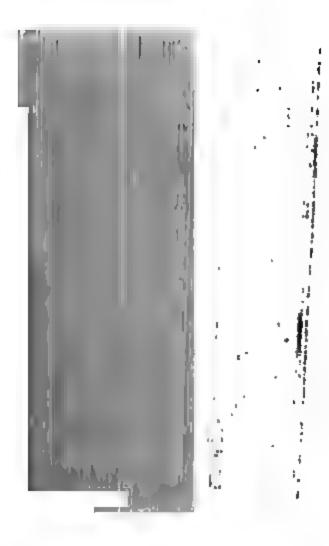
are now to end in a bliss more strange and perfect than the sorrows themselves out o which it grew.

But words were not made to describe the wondering joy that awaited the Roya Wanderers, on reaching Ephesus, and tendering their grateful homage at the altar of the chaste Goddess:—nor need it be told, to thou who have listened to the early events of our simple history, and know that it is the long lost Thaisa herself who administers the sacres duties of that pure altar. Suffice it that three such happy creatures as that day offered up their hearts in thankfulness to the Gods were never yet found, except among those who have drunk long and deep of the cup of human sorrow.

And now, the Wanderings of Prince Pericles once more lead him to his beloved Tyre, never again to leave it, or to leave tasting there that tranquil joy which trans cends all transport. For not even in tha blessed hour which first saw his Thaisa fill the hitherto vacant seat beside him on his now perfect throne, nor on that blissful day which gave their Marina to him who had so nobly saved her, did the stream of Pericles' joy rise above that happy level on which bloom the sweetest flowers of human life, and, overflowing which, the stream misses its true course, and strays from its appointed end.

So terminate, for the present, our Chatsworth Nights' Entertainments. Whether they shall be renewed, and "The Romance of of a Week" be extended, some day or other, to a Fortnight, must depend (as it ought) on the will and pleasure of those who may still affect such old-fashioned simplicities.

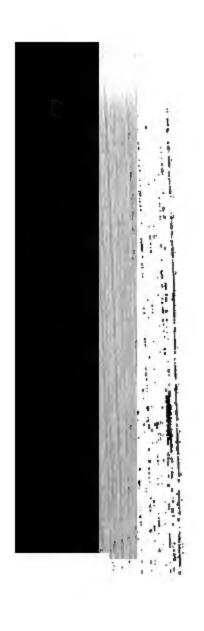
THE END.



•

•

•





•

i



